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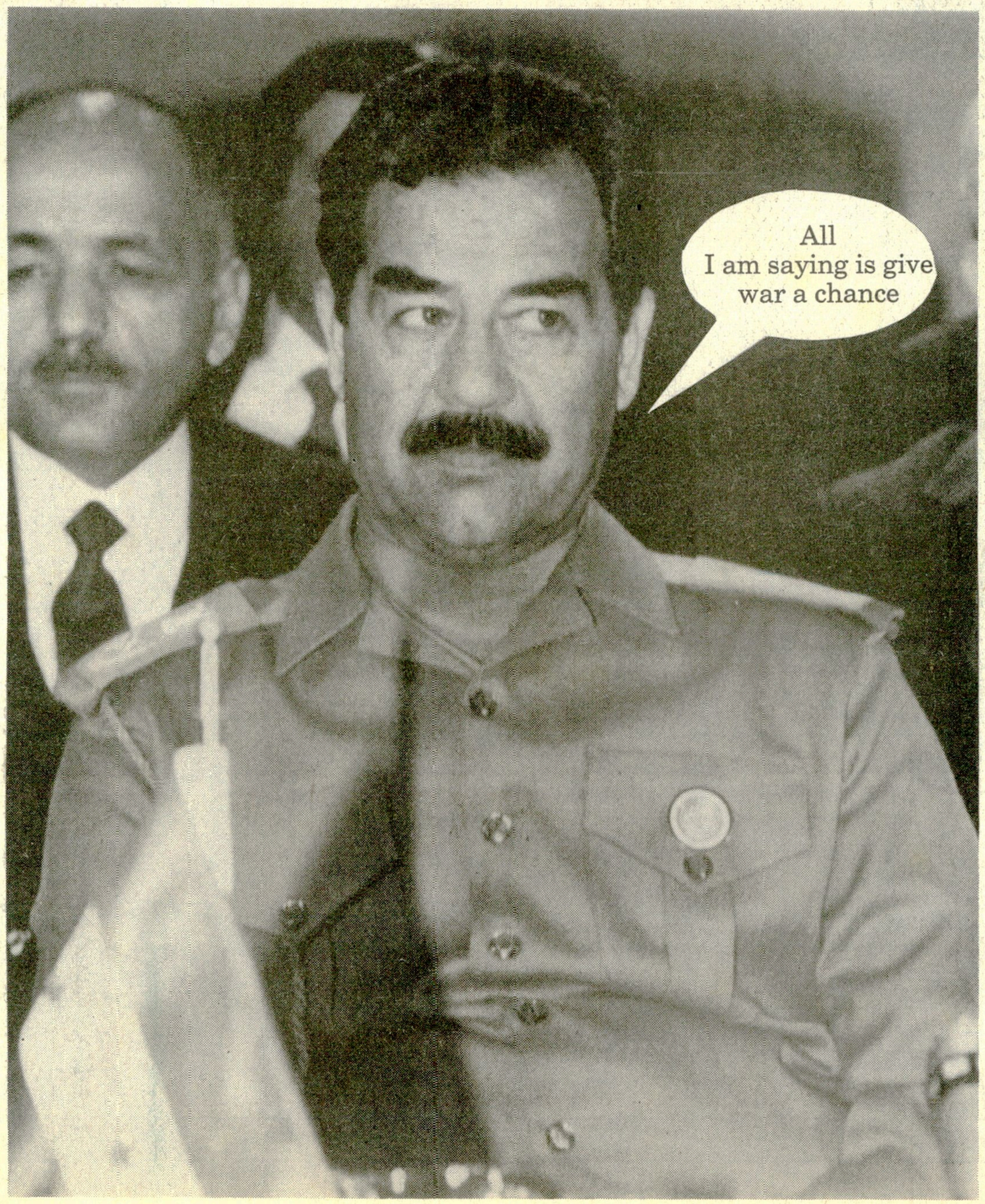

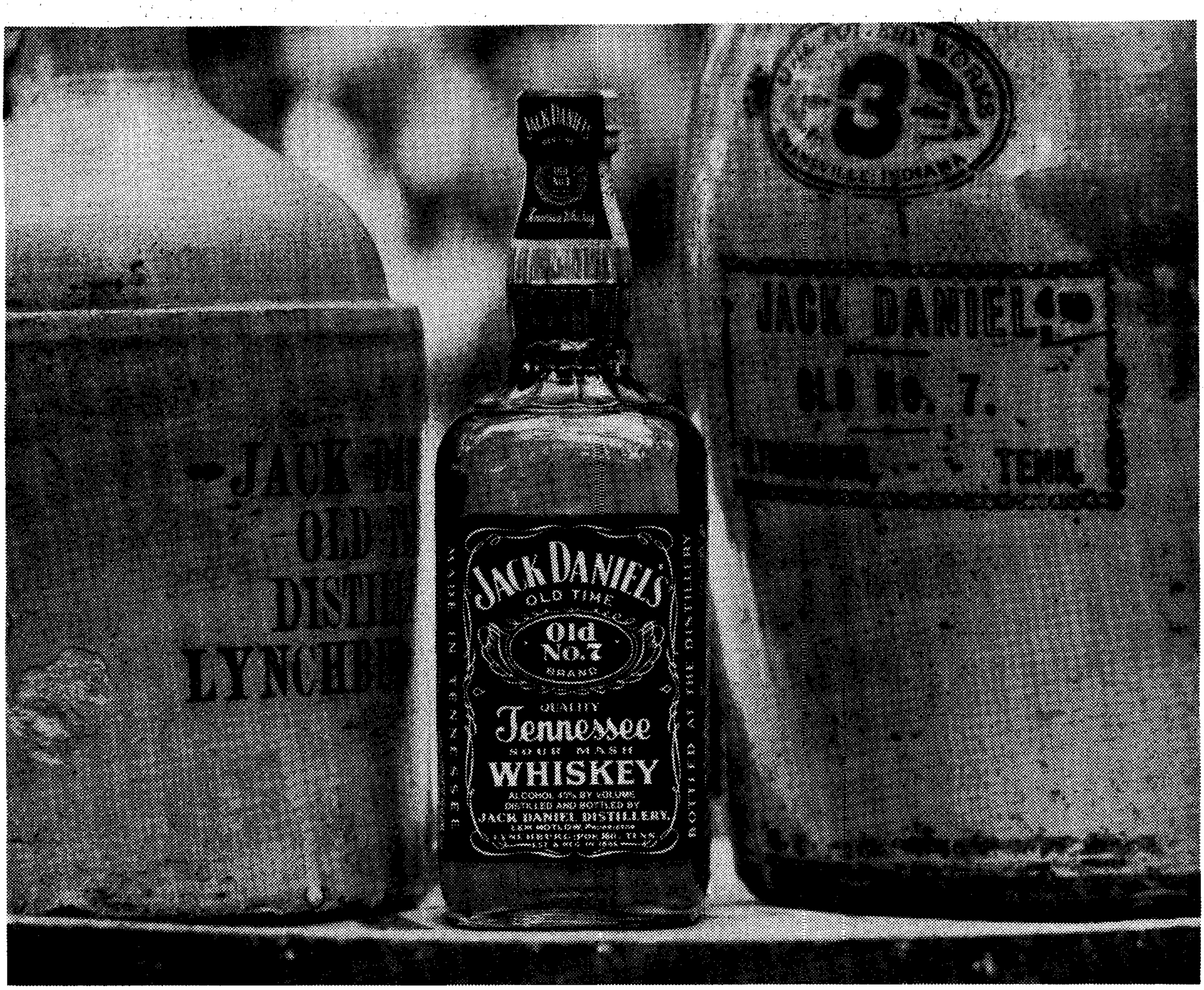

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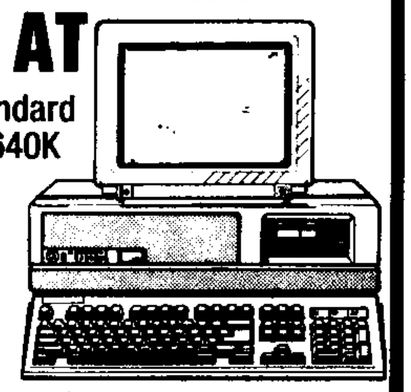

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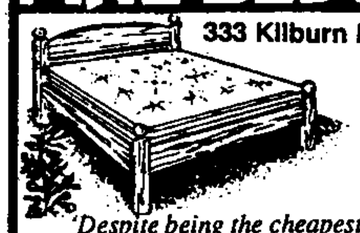

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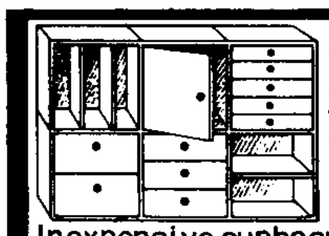

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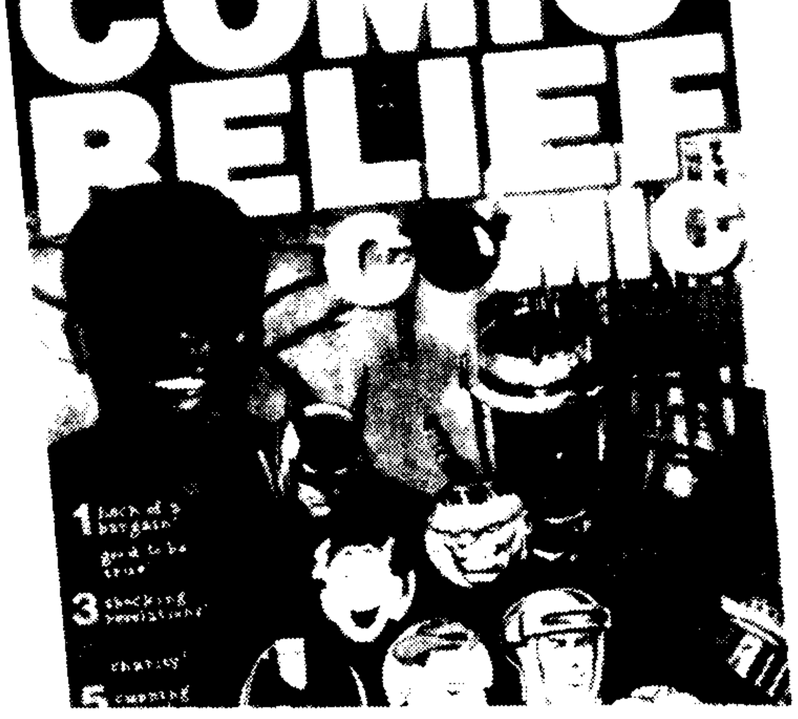

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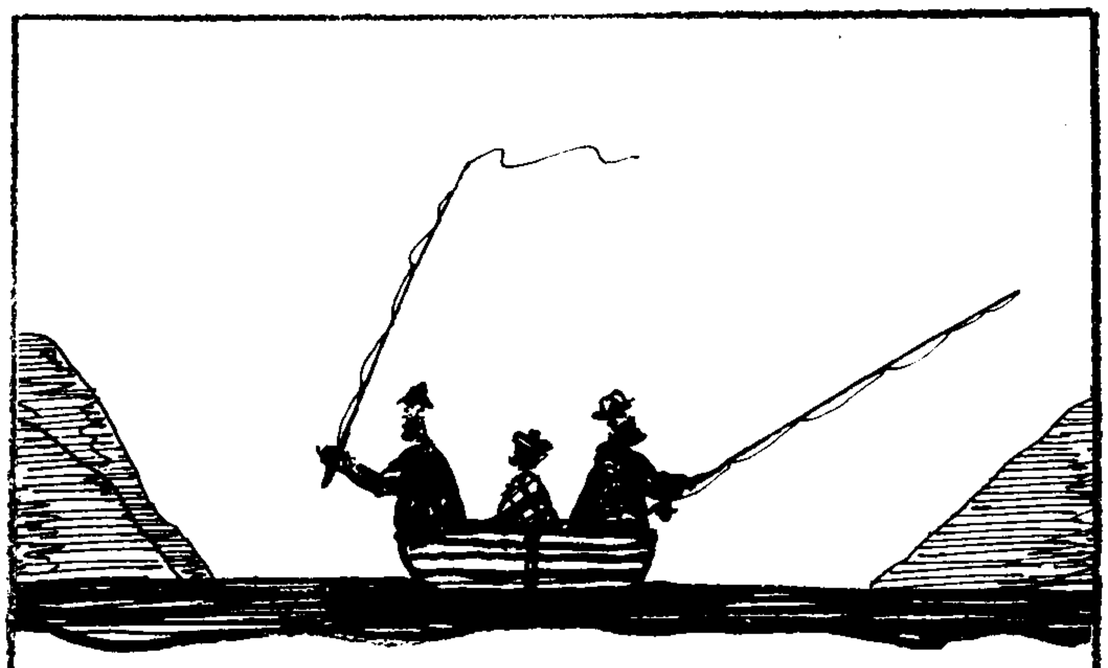


Nae Macallan . . . Nae Fish.

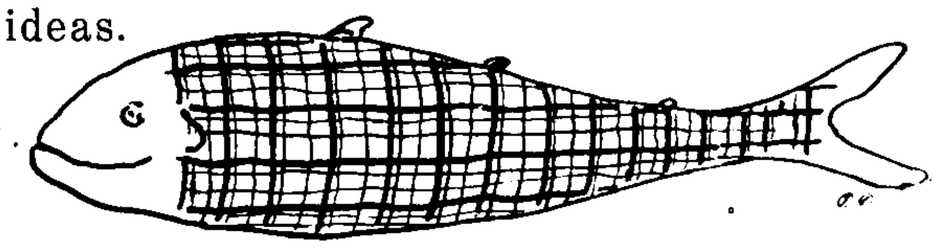
A STORY IS TOLD of Donald, a revered ghillie in years gone by on a certain loch of our acquaintance.

It was a bad morning for trout, the water a glassy calm.

Donald toiled all morning at the oars while his cargo of two London businessmen caught nothing.

As lunchtime neared, Donald began to look forward to the lustrous sherry-gold depths of the bottle of The Macallan Malt Whisky which was the customary reward for a deserving ghillie.

But the otiose Sassenachs had other ideas.



'No fish, Donald', they cried. 'Then no whisky.'

Donald said nothing, and ate his lunch at some remove. But the iron had entered his soul.

The wind rose. And all afternoon while every other boat on the loch was landing an almost miraculous draught of trout, Donald rowed his clients slowly up and down the one unruffled stretch of water.

When evening came, he deposited his fishless clients on the bank, and surveyed them gravely as they rifled through their treasuries of insult, goggling like the trout they had so signally failed to capture.

'Nae Macallan', said Donald, at last.
'Nae fish'.

And rowed off into the gloaming.

The Macallan. The Malt.

Gnome

A TRADE and Industry Select Committee Report has had the nerve to criticise me, Lord Gnome, formerly the Secretary for Trade and Industry (Enterprise we called it in those dear, departed, Thatcherite days) over the Rover affair.

How dare they? Am I not the man of whom Mrs Thatcher spoke so admiringly when she said: "Other people bring me problems, David, you bring me your resignation tomorrow"?

Even though no longer in the service of the Government, I cannot believe the disloyalty that has led the Select Committee to suggest that I misled the House of Commons and that I offered "sweeteners" in order to make British Aerospace buy Rover.

I will not accept the report. As we say in the business, I won't buy it. Unless, of course, the Committee offer me £44 million as a sweetener.

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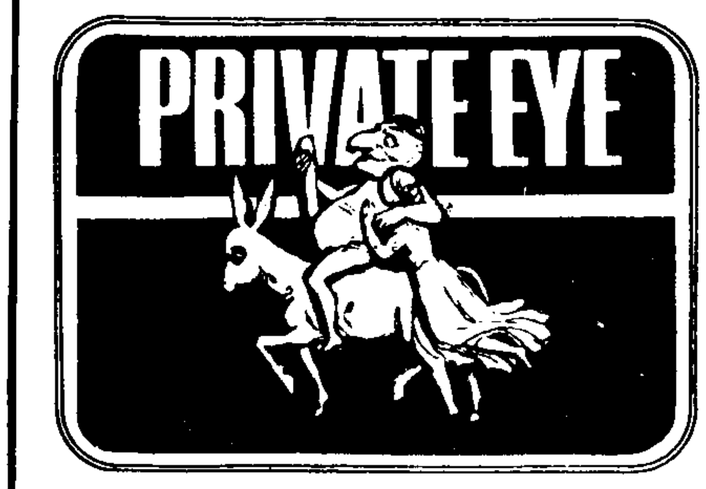


COLOUR SECTION

MANY a Midlands Conservative Club will miss the jovial company of retired Det Supt George Reade, formerly of West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad, who led the investigation into the six men held in Morecambe after the Birmingham pub bombings of 1974.

Just as the Birmingham Six case was about to come on at the appeal court and as the evidence of the police was the only shot left in the empty locker of the prosecution, Reade, the most important policeman in the case, hopped it to Australia. A long and crucial interview with him there by no less a figure than the chief constable of Cornwall turned out to be the decisive factor in the DPP's sudden decision to withdraw.

Reade it was who compiled the famous "Reade schedule" — a list of interviews of the six men crudely altered apparently so that it could fit in with the evidence given by his officers when the case first went to trial in 1975. When the case was referred back to the Court of Appeal in 1985, the defence argued that the Reade schedule was a deliberate attempt to pervert the course of justice by inventing times and interviews which never took place.

This was vigorously denied by a not altogether coherent Reade in the witness box. Indeed, Reade's very incoherence seems to have helped him. The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Lane, in his judgement, made it clear that he thought Reade far too thick and bumbling to have devised such a complicated conspiracy.

How Reade managed to reach Australia (without any sign that he intended to return and give evidence) is a matter for the authorities. After reading the interview with the chief constable of Cornwall, which amounts to a confession by Reade, the DPP, Allan Green, has thrown in his hand.

He had already agreed that the chemical tests on the men's hands which allegedly showed explosives on them, and which led to their arrest in the first place, can no longer be relied up on. Now his police evidence has been badly sabotaged by Reade's admissions.

What happens next depends on the outcome of the furious argument which now rages in the judiciary. If the six men come out it will be a black day for Lord Lane, whose extraordinary judgement last time went out of its way to criticise the Home Secretary for sending the case to appeal. A stubborn rearguard action not to concede the case is being fought by the more reactionary judges led by Lord Justice Russell, he of the Carl Bridgewater appeal in 1988/9. Russell it was who told the DPP in a recent case of fabricated evidence by the former West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad that it was the judges and not the prosecutors who would decide whether a conviction was unsafe or unsatisfactory. Even though the prosecutor feels there is no evidence to keep people in prison, the judges might still decide that there is.

Russell has had a long interest in the Birmingham Six case. When the men were first tried at Lancaster in 1975, the junior prosecuting QC was an ambitious Lancashire recorder who would one day become leader of the northern circuit, and later a lord justice: Pat Russell.

RAIL passengers and motorists know only too well how the Department of Transport helps keep Britain on the move during bad weather: it stays at home and does nothing.

The DoT's friends in the road haulage industry, on the other hand, expect better treatment and they get it — fast. For example, snow started to fall on the evening of Wednesday 6 February and by Thursday morning Gerry Turvey, director-general of the Freight Transport Association, had telephoned DoT under-secretary David Lyness asking him to revoke all the legal limits on lorry drivers' working time.

The supine DoT's rush to do its master's bidding meant the necessary "statutory instrument" was in the ministerial red box for signature that night. This will reassure passengers who are worried about the DoT's reluctance to improve the safety of roll-on roll-off ferries: Marsham Street *can* act fast when its friends demand it.

Some DoT officials were puzzled why the FTA bothered with its request since the EEC regulation that the DoT unilaterally revoked overnight already allows drivers to exceed the limits to finish journeys disrupted by bad weather. But the FTA knew what it was doing. The economic recession has caused many freight members to think twice before renewing their subscriptions and reminders are met with the question: "What do I get for my money?"

What more impressive answer than to persuade ministers to lift all restrictions on the most dangerous vehicles on the road while simultaneously asking all other road users to drive as little as possible?

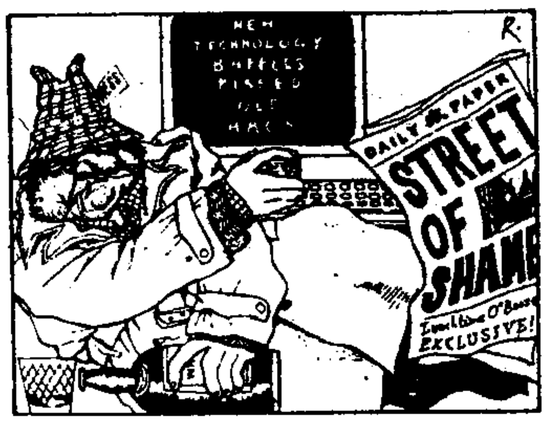
P & O NEWS

JUDGING from the *Eye*'s postbag not everyone who works for P&O is entirely delighted with the agreement employees have been asked to sign about working conditions on board the company's ferries.

Its aim is simple — more work done by fewer employees — and two clauses have caused particular offence. The first obliges a crew member to work his relief's tour of duty if the relief does not turn up because of sickness; the second, also inspired by the obsession that ferry workers are malingerers, requires all employees to give management the right to inspect their medical records.

When it was pointed out to P&O managers that the new agreement might affect safety adversely, the directors announced that they were "prepared to take the risk". This cheerful approach is believed to be not unrelated to the recent decision of Mr Justice Turner not to allow the prosecution case against P&O directors for the manslaughter of 200 of their travellers at Zeebrugge to go to the jury.

"I hope they're released — then we can nick them for the Downing Street job"



LAST week's *What The Papers Say* awards at the Savoy Hotel swiftly degenerated into farce, especially after the laughable decision to name the *Grauniad* as "Newspaper of the Year". The most enjoyable spectacle was that of Anthony Bevins, the Buddy Holly lookalike from the *Indescribablyboring*, receiving *his* award from Kenneth Baker, the Home Secretary. Baker loathes Bevins and has refused to speak to him for the past two years, since Bevins wrote a less than flattering article about the then Tory chairman. Baker visibly winced as he shook the hack's hand and congratulated him through gritted teeth.

Meanwhile, the undisputed *prima donna assoluta* was Lynn Barber of the *Sindie*, Feature Writer of the Year, who was infuriated by the silly upper-class voice in which an actress read out extracts from her work. Cornering the woman afterwards, the demon Barber warned: "I'm going to get you sacked".

PS. So excited was the *Sindie* at finally winning a prize that it filled a whole page last weekend with a self-congratulatory piece headed "How *Does* Lynn Barber Do It?" Good interviewing, Barber revealed, "is about listening rather than asking questions... Clever questions, in my view, are a waste of time." This may explain why, in an interview she hopes to have soon with Cliff Richard, she proposes to start with the following questions:

1) Have you ever fallen in love?

2) With a man?

IAN WATSON'S "resignation" as editor of *The European* (aka *Le Pisse-pauvre*) wasn't quite as amicable as Robert Maxwell claimed: Watson has told colleagues that the firing was "like a Scud up me arse".

Having now been given the sinecure of "editorial director", Watson recently confronted the new editor, John Bryant, in the *Mirror Group*'s in-house pub, the appropriately-named Stab In The Back. After several bottles of champagne, Watson warned Bryant in his delightful Scottish tones that "no one's fucking about with my paper". Bryant promptly returned to the executive suite he had taken over from Watson and redesigned the front page.

It is believed that Watson fell out with Maxwell over the Cap'n's decision to buy the defunct *Sunday Correspondent* and merge it with the *Pisse-pauvre*. As another executive commented despairingly: "You don't use a corpse to revive an ailing patient."

Maxwell has also acquired a fair number of the maggots that go with the corpse — led by John Bryant himself, the man who presided over the *Corrie*'s demise. Another new arrival is David "Bunter" Blake, the former deputy editor of the *Corrie* whose job at the *European* is a mystery.

He has been given no title or contract, and he works alone surrounded by some cardboard partitions in an otherwise deserted part of the office. Still, he clearly thinks he has his feet under the desk, so to speak: he has taken to walking round the office in his socks, an unpleasant habit which many ex-*Corrie* staff say contributed to their paper's failure.

Bryant, meanwhile, interviewed in *The Independent* by cuddlesome Emma Soames, has indicated what he sees as the three main problems of his new job: raising circulation, increasing advertising revenue and getting the distribution right. As for editing the paper or what he will be putting in it, there was scarcely a word.

AS THE Maxwell empire crumbles, his troops have started fighting one another.

Senior staff from the *European* were drowning their sorrows in champagne last week in a Holborn drinking den when they were confronted by a bunch of *Daily Mirror* sub-editors, fired up with resentment at a rumour that they were about to suffer staff cuts in order to finance the continued existence of the *Le Pisse-pauvre*.

The joshing turned nuclear when one of the *Mirror* boys fashioned a number of model Scud missiles from unread copies of the *European* that were lying on the bar and launched them at *Pisspoorean* deputy editor and soup columnist Peter Millar.

An unseemly brawl took place in the street, in which two *Mirror* hacks, evidently used to this sort of thing, saw off a much larger contingent of *Euro*-toughs. The violence only stopped when a passing Irishman claimed he had the power to bar the participants from drinking in the area.

CAP'N Bob flew to Davos last month to attend a gathering of "philanthropist businessmen". The Cap'n is proud of his charitable works, but he clearly has no truck with the idea that charity begins at home. The latest example of his "philanthropy" to his own employees was the abrupt dismissal of 60 *Mirror* staff who worked in stores, engineering and building maintenance at midday on Friday 1 February. With no warning, they were all issued with black plastic bags and told to be out of the building within an hour.

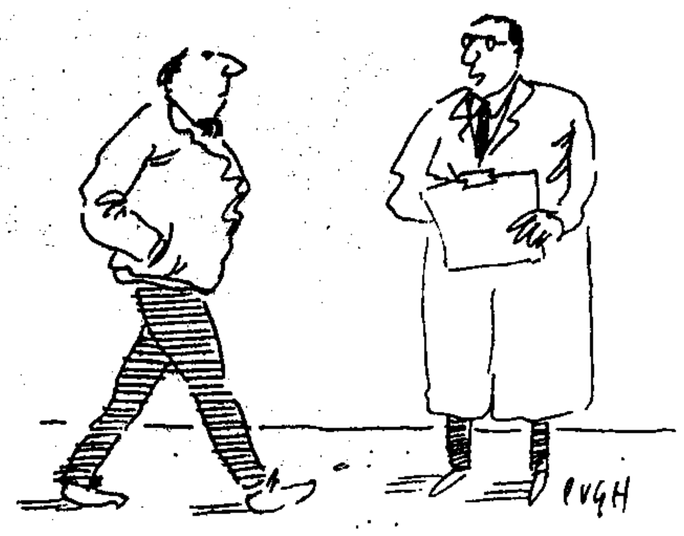
One storeman, who had worked for the paper for 38 years, pointed out that he was due to retire later this year anyway. It made no difference. While he was hastily emptying the contents of his locker into the rubbish-sack, a youth appeared and asked him to hurry up. "I'm your replacement", the lad explained. It turned out that even as the old-timers were being given the boot in this undignified fashion, a bus containing their newly-hired successors had pulled up in New Fetter Lane.

Meanwhile, yet another of Maxwell's cost-saving measures has created near-mutiny; he has decreed that the cashiers can only pay out £40,000 per month in expenses for the whole of the vast *Mirror Group*. Once this sum has been reached, the department simply closes down for the rest of the month. Anyone who is still owed money then has to join the queue all over again the next month and hope to get to the front before the magic figure is reached. Some *Mirror* hacks are still waiting to be reimbursed for travel fares and hotel bills which they incurred last autumn.

Still, it's all in a good cause — fattening up the company for the company's impending flotation, which may put anything up to £500 million in Cap'n Bob's already bulging pockets.

LAST WEEKEND the *Sunday Times* ran a grovelling apology to Trevor Nunn referring to the alleged activities of Nunn during his time at the RSC and National Theatre.

This was particularly entertaining as the apology appeared only a few pages away from a pompous



"Excuse me, do you think there are too many opinion polls?"

Atticus piece about how Sir John Junor always had to correct things in his column. Atticus is, of course, a dustbin for Andrew Brillo's little score settlers; but Nunn is now on chummy terms with Andrew.

The unfortunate hack responsible for the Nunn article was the former *Insight* reporter and now chief investigative reporter Peter Hounam. *His* editor at the time was Rowena Webster whom Neill does not have to sack because she deserted along with many others to the *Sunday Express*.

GENEVIEVE COOPER, acting editor of the *Evening Standard*, made a terrible *faux pas* at her paper's recent annual award to the Royal Ballet in Covent Garden.

For a woman who likes to remain unobtrusive, she drew spectacular attention to herself after Princess Margaret presented this year's winner, Darcy Bussell, with her prize. In her speech on behalf of the sponsor, Cooper referred to last year's winner as Vivienne Ventura, the ageing international playgirl.

Vivianna Durante, the principal of the Royal Ballet who was the actual winner, was plainly not amused. It was perhaps not surprising that *Standard* arts hack Michael Owen ushered Cooper from the theatre shortly afterwards and before the final act of the three-part performance.

BERNARD Clark, owner of the company that makes *Hard News* for Channel 4, bought London's dreary listings-magazine *City Limits* from the receiver for £67,000 four months ago. In his first meeting with staff, he said that he believed in the virtues of "creative chaos".

They are beginning to see what he means. Last Wednesday he sacked 13 of them; eight more promptly resigned.

Clark, an ageing mustachioed hippy, told the spartist hacks when he bought the penniless magazine that "I want to make it fun to work at *City Limits*! In my company we have parties every month". He also promised the then editor, gay playwright Carl Miller, that the parties would give him the opportunity to meet "lots of gorgeous girls". Miller resigned shortly afterwards.

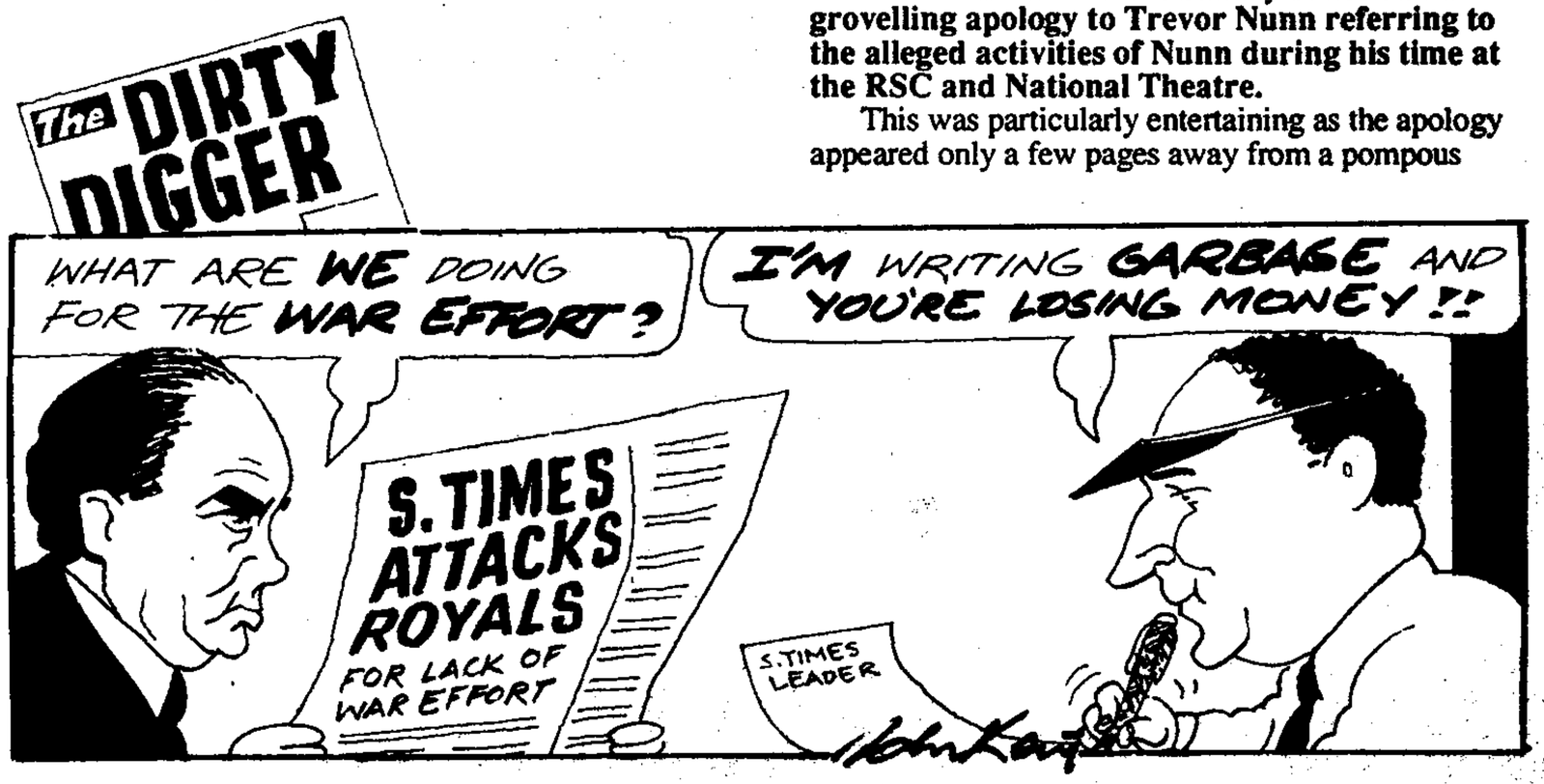
"The trouble with this magazine," Clark lamented last week, "is that it just doesn't make me want to say 'Hey, wow!'" What he's aiming at is presumably represented by the couple on the front of last week's issue, illustrating a piece called "Having It Away" — the result of Clark's suggestion that it should run a feature on dirty weekends. This is in line with his other ideas for the mag, such as a guide to "Where to Get Laid in London" and the introduction of adverts for phone-in sex lines with names such as "Grope My Crotch" and "Strip Me Naked".

As Clark has frequently been heard to complain in the office: "Hey, I'm 43, but I'm the maddest person around here!"

THE POOLING of news reports is common in the Gulf War and fulfils the military requirement for censorship.

However, those hacks *not* included in the pool must do whatever they can to unearth stories for their respective media — and if they venture too far from Riyadh or Jeddah they are likely to be arrested.

What makes the management of the news so insidious, however, is that those *in* the pool regularly shop those struggling *outside* it to the military authorities. Fingers are now being pointed accusingly at staffers on the *New York Times*.


The DIRTY DIGGER
WHAT ARE WE DOING FOR THE WAR EFFORT?
I'M WRITING GARBAGE AND YOU'RE LOSING MONEY!!
S.TIMES ATTACKS ROYALS FOR LACK OF WAR EFFORT
S.TIMES LEADER

THE *Guardian* diary made a terrible error on 21 February when it dared to suggest in its lead item that Norman Lamont and other ministers were so angry with an item in the *Sunday Express* that they prevailed on Lord Stevens, the paper's proprietor, to sack editor Robin Morgan.

Quite properly, the *Guardian* was obliged to publish a grovelling apology (23 February) to Lord Stevens and Express Newspapers. But what happened was this.

On Sunday 17 February, the *Sunday Express* revealed that Norman Lamont and other ministers had conspired to oust Mrs Thatcher from 10 Downing Street.

On Monday 18 February, at a Downing Street reception, John Major beckoned editor Morgan to one side and told him in his most earnest tones that "Norman is frightfully upset" about the article.

On Tuesday 19 February, Norman Lamont had lunch with Lord Stevens. After lunch Lord Stevens' chauffeur was expecting to take His Lordship back to the offices of MIM Britannia Ltd, where Stevens is chairman; instead the destination was abruptly changed to Express Newspapers.

On arrival at the *Express* HQ, Lord Stevens phoned Robin Morgan and told him he was fired. An attempt was made to persuade Morgan to say he had resigned "for personal reasons" but Morgan contemptuously refused to do so. He was offered rather less than the usual compensation in such cases.

The circulation of the *Sunday Express* has been in free fall for many months. The suggestion from the above facts that Lord Stevens would have been influenced by Norman Lamont to sack his editor is a typical example of irresponsible journalism.

AS THE election approaches Labour's economic policy looks like being fatally similar to the Government's.

Sadly for Labour, both Neil Kinnock and John Smith, the shadow chancellor, are completely dependent on their two main advisers: the official John Eatwell in Kinnochio's office; and the unofficial Gavyn Davies, chief economist of the American finance firm Goldman Sachs, who seems as much at home writing for the *Sunday Telegraph* as he was for the *Sunday Correspondent*.

Both agree that the pound is not overvalued and that the disciplines of remaining in the European exchange rate mechanism are essential.

If this means continuing to curb inflation with ever-rising unemployment, this could be embarrassing. With sterling devaluation firmly rejected and any form of incomes policy also ruled out, there will be nothing for the voters to choose between Smith and Lamont.

BRIAN Silvester, a Conservative councillor in the Crewe and Nantwich constituency of Labour MP Gwynneth Dunwoody, is outraged at the failure of the Commons registrar of members' interests to investigate a possible breach of the code by La Dunwoody.

Two national newspapers, *The Indescribablyboring on Sunday* and *The Observer*, have stated that Mrs Dunwoody acted as a consultant to lobbyists Channel Communications & Planning, which represented groups campaigning against the planned British Rail high-speed link from the Channel tunnel to London. The director of Channel Communications, David Crowhurst, told the *Sindie* his firm had paid Mrs Dunwoody £1,500 for six consultancies: "All Mrs Dunwoody really did was put a few questions down in the House and book a few committee rooms."

The *Observer Magazine* later repeated the claim by Crowhurst that his firm had paid La Dunwoody for her consultancy work, though it also carried a denial from La Dunwoody that she had ever held any such consultancy.

Cllr Silvester has twice written to La Dunwoody asking her to confirm whether she received a consultancy fee from Channel Communications, but she has not replied. He has also written to Peter Viggers, a Conservative MP who sits on the select committee for members' interests. Viggers referred the matter to the registrar, Jim Hastings, who dismissed the complaint on the ground that mere press reports are insufficient evidence to put before the committee.

Under the rules, the registrar must wait until an MP or member of the public raises a specific complaint supported by *prima facie* evidence. All that is required is for Viggers to contact David Crowhurst and ascertain the facts — but he has decided not to pursue inquiries himself.

PETER MANDELSON, Labour's former public relations guru, is still finding it hard to settle in to smoke-stacked, smoggy Hartlepool where he is a parliamentary candidate.

When he wins the seat, which lies on the fringes of Geordie Land, Mandelson will of course be obliged to rent a modest two-up two-down domicile in a street of back-to-backs infested with racing pigeons.

But although the great man recently told hacks that he has started practising living in Hartlepool, the Mandelson name has failed to appear on the local council's list of electors for his address in Hutton Avenue.

Surely it cannot be that the supreme stylist of Labour's *nouveau* moderation is making a principled stand against his local poll tax collectors?

NO ONE seems to have noticed the arrest of seven former directors and executives of the bankrupt mortgage company Homes Assured in dawn swoops on 31 January.

They were charged with various fraud offences at Clerkenwell magistrates' court at 2pm that afternoon. There was a solicitor called Davies; a Miss Anita Jennings and her mother; two men called Sharma; a Mr Lester and Mr Dobson. One person who was not arrested and was not charged was the former chairman of Homes Assured, Sir Edward Du Cann, former chairman of the Conservative Party and currently chairman of Lonrho.

Sir Edward, of course, resigned from the company a day or two before the liquidators were called in. He had intended to resign a little earlier, but unfortunately sent his resignation letter to the wrong address in Guildford, only to have it returned "to sender".

Perhaps the attorney-general, who has been kept closely informed of developments in the case, was inclined to believe that if the chairman didn't know the address of the company, he probably didn't know much else about it.

'Backbiter'

UN NEWS

BRITISH and American ambassadors at the United Nations security council have been remarkably supportive of secretary-general Javier Perez de Cuellar. Why?

The question is particularly interesting since only in January de Cuellar was telling Saddam Hussein "You have put the fate of the Palestinian people on the agenda" before thanking him, in fluent *Arslikhan*, for making President Bush mention Palestine in his speech to the UN general assembly ("You deserve all the credit for this achievement for the question of Palestine").

"What a barmy evening"

At this meeting de Cuellar also agreed with Saddam that the United States' refusal to allow Iraqi foreign minister Tariq Aziz to attend the UN was a breach of the headquarters treaty, and went on to dismiss the UN resolutions against Iraq as "not my resolutions, but the security council's resolutions". When Saddam said: "What America wants today goes, not what the security councils wants" de Cuellar bounced back with feeling: "I am on your side, as far as I am concerned."

So given these comments, why should the Americans and British now be so protective of de Cuellar?

As the Iraqi transcript of the meeting confirms and his own report suggests, de Cuellar went on to accept the position of mediator. "Do you authorise me to tell the security council that you want continuous discussions to be conducted through the secretary-general?" he asked Hussein, who accepted with alacrity.

De Cuellar then confirmed his acceptance of the position after warning Hussein that if he went back emptyhanded, it would provoke the war. So Hussein made it clear that even though it would be impolitic to use the word "withdrawal" if he wanted to stay president of Iraq, he was prepared to countenance the actuality. When de Cuellar queried: "If I understand you well, your position on Kuwait is irreversible", Hussein responded quickly: "I didn't say this; you said it."

On 14 January, the Iraqi News Agency carried a report saying that de Cuellar was expected back in Baghdad shortly. At the same time, this seemed inexplicable; but in the light of his now revealed promises it becomes plain. After he left Baghdad he changed his mind — or had it changed for him. His report to the security council, although it hinted at Saddam's willingness to discuss a package deal, was incredibly downbeat in its ending, leaving the war party on the council to go ahead with its plan to begin bombing at the first opportunity.

It is hardly surprising that since then de Cuellar has been giving contradictory signals, showing every sign of breaking under the strain. Could the war have been averted?

NUMERO UNO

MICHAEL HEATH

I SEE that Jeffrey Archer has finally lost his one remaining marble, his recent appearance on BBC 1's *Question Time* being most entertaining for connoisseurs of Archole absurdity.

Not only did Jeffrey refer to Kuwaiti soldiers being defeated by the allies, but he also floated a curious new Conservative policy in relation to British Rail: namely that the Government should "nationalise it".

What he meant to say, of course, was that *Iraqi* soldiers would be defeated by the allies and that British Rail should be *privatised*. No doubt Jeffrey's communications skills will be much appreciated during the next general election campaign.

● *MY demented friend Paul "Loony Bins" Johnson is keeping up his persecution of the BBC and all who sail in it, as I discover when I attend a dinner given by milord Weidenfeld for the Israeli deputy foreign minister. Every time poor David Dimbleby tries to ask the man a question, he is interrupted by the barking tones of "Loony Bins" shouting "traitor!" at him.*

Johnson tells me that he has been invited on to the BBC's Greater London Radio to justify his attacks on the Corporation — but has refused. From some obscure moral principle, perhaps? Not at all. "They don't pay enough", he explains.

FRANK Johnson (the *other* right wing lunatic called Johnson) has been busy recently compiling poisonous *Sunday Telegraph* profiles of Chris Patten.

However, relief has come to him, I am told, in a recurring dream which he finds most enjoyable.

In it, Mrs Thatcher appears with a machine gun and proceeds to mow down all those MPs and journalists who betrayed her.

The only trouble is that Johnson keeps waking up.

I AM APPALLED by the spate of press attacks on members of our beloved royal family.

The latest — a disgusting piece of keyhole "journalism" by the *Daily Mirror's* royal muckraker James Whitaker — gives intimate details of the Princess of Wales, referring insolently to her "muff".

"The secret of Diana's muff was revealed last night," drools the vile Whitaker. "She keeps a handkerchief in the concealed compartment perfumed to make her hands sweet smelling."

Thankfully the patriotic Cap'n Bob was equally aghast and spiked the indecorous item immediately.

● *I HEAR that Lady Lucinda Lambton told her mother of her decision to marry silver-haired charmer Sir Peregrine Worsthorne in a phone call on the day after the Gulf War began.*

"Have you heard the news?" she asked her mother.

"Yes," replied her mother, "it's awful, horrible. He's such a beastly man."

Momentarily dumbfounded, Lucinda was relieved to discover that her mother was referring to the outbreak of war and the egregious Saddam Hussein, not the saintly voluptuary, Sir Perishing Worthless.

Pseuds Corner

Penny for their thoughts... Kate Whitehead, aged 22, who is studying graffiti in women's toilets as part of her MA degree in English literature at Sussex University, records examples in Victorian conveniences at Marine Parade, Brighton.

Guardian

I don't want people to buy my clothes because they are fashionable. I want to make them think.

GIORGIO ARMANI
Ms Magazine

Mrs Thatcher's Contribution
The Lady has gone. Her legacy was a new Britain. She transformed a decaying hulk, the sick man of Europe, into a sleek proud vanguard of courage, example and deed.

She was a star of international renown — she slew the dragons: from Galtieri to the Iron Curtain to Arthur Scargill.

Now she graces the pages of history and the mists of mythology forever and we welcome her worthy successor — our new leader, John Major. May he be guided by her light.

PAUL KRELING
Chairman, Crofton Park Con. Assn.

Steve Grant, in his review of 'The Homecoming' (*TO* 1065), talks of "some rather ham-fisted contemporary references to child abuse absent in the original". I don't know what he's talking about. The only word not in the original text of the play is the word "fuck", which I introduced for the present production.

HAROLD PINTER
Letter to Time Out

Along with 15 other people, I live in a squat in Islington called the Winnie Mandela Under 5s House. It used to be a nursery school and it's one of the most famous squats in London.

I wake up between nine and ten. The first thing I do is five minutes of Primal Scream Therapy. This involves just screaming as loud as possible. A few of us in the house do it. Then I have five minutes of total silence, followed by an exercise which involves saying the word "dorkey" over and over again for ten minutes. It's the idea of a man in the house we call the "fan man". He's a performance artist and he's working on this idea of getting twelve sixteen-year-old girls to sing songs with rows of electric fans behind them.

BOB COPE
The Good Times

CONTRIBUTORS: A. Pitman, Guy R. Woodward, R.A. Pointing, Anon, Helen Cross.

£10 paid for entries

Refer to Pressdram v. Arkell

OUR piece about Adnan Khashoggi in the last issue has caused a flurry of activity among his supporters. Chief among these being Mrs Khashoggi — not the current wife who featured in a recent charming *Hello!* skiing spread, but a previous one, Soraya.

She insisted that her ex-husband was a good Saudi citizen and would not be involved in trying to sell Iraqi crude to the Indian government. He was, she said, negotiating a sugar contract and she would send the documents to prove it. These failed to arrive.

Instead a letter, ostensibly from Adnan Khashoggi but in fact from his son Mohammed, was delivered (see *Letters*). He said there were no sugar contracts, merely proposals, and that the family did not deal in oil.

Meanwhile the sugar story raised a laugh from the *Eye*'s Indian correspondents who, like most of the Indian press, had been outraged by their prime minister having a secret meeting with a notorious arms dealer.

When asked about the appalling coverage of his father's Indian trip, Mohammed said it was "only the press". But he could not fill in the details of the supposedly innocent top-level conference. Nor could he explain why the Bombay high court had issued a writ against his father on 7 January for allegedly bribing an Indian lawyer and MP in the Bofors scandal to the tune of $100,000.

Nor could he explain why the Indians were so furious about their PM Chandra Shekhar having this clandestine meeting with Khashoggi and the equally unsavoury Chandraswami (see *Eyes passim*) on 30 January. Both men, of course, are relishing their new found liberty having been "out of circulation" for a while, but this was not mentioned in the letter either.

And nor could he explain why a Dr Swami, Indian minister of commerce, flew to Tripoli in *Khashoggi's* DC9 and then returned home empty-handed. Perhaps Khashoggi himself will tell all when he flies in to appear on Channel 4's *After Dark* this Saturday.

IN NEW YORK for the weekend I attend *Miss Saigon* where I am disappointed to learn that the critique of American materialism in Jonathan Pryce's bravura performance of "The American Dream" has been heavily revised.

This was the only sign of intellect at work in Cameron McIntosh's show and I fear it has been changed lest patriotic American audiences misconstrue it as intended to refer to them. McIntosh assures me it has nothing whatsoever to do with the war — and who am I to disbelieve him?

● *MY OLD CHUM Conor Cruise O'Brien, former Observer columnist and professional Irish person, is anxious to have his career reappraised.*

Instead of being known as "a hack" he would henceforth like to be feted as "a writer". This has everything to do with the quality of his oeuvre — and nothing to do with the trouble he is having with Dublin's Inland Revenue over a disputed I£60,000.

FACT: "Writers" (but not journalists) in the Irish republic enjoy tax-free status.

I UNDERSTAND that Martin Amis is emerging as a surprise beneficiary of the royalties from Salman Rushdie's controversial novel *The Satanic Verses*.

Although newly converted back to Islam, Salman has not become a killjoy and has, instead, been whiling away some of his many hours in captivity by playing poker in a school with fellow-novelist Amis, who has thus far had the best of the winnings.

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

CONSIDER, if you will, two public monuments that honour famous men in our capital.

First, at the top of Whitehall, is King Charles I, where Le Sueur's lively equestrian statue rides proudly above an elaborate stone pedestal, subtly modelled with cornices and mouldings and enriched with decoration. The whole — sculpture and base — is a single, grand conception: monumental, magnificent, sophisticated and civic — unlike the nearby memorial to Mountbatten in Horse Guards Parade.

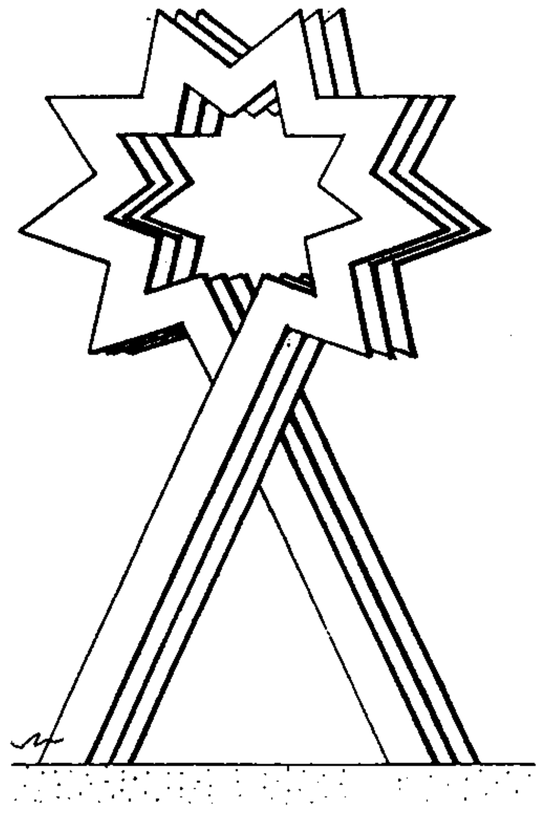
Here, a ridiculously stiff statue of the old sea dog stands on a pedestal with as much subtlety of proportion as an upturned shoe box placed on a pyramid of crudely disposed steps. A statue, say, of Enver Hoxha in Tirana looks more accomplished than this wretched and naive insult to its historic location.

Such are the depths to which public monumental art has now sunk in this country. But now London is threatened with much worse. Something called the Fountain Society is proposing to inflict a gratuitous "Queen's Fountain" on Parliament Square. Never mind that this conception will be a wonderful spot for planting bombs, that the wind will ensure that its huge jets of water will soak passers-by and that this urban space as laid out in 1951 is perfectly satisfactory as it is; the real objection to the design which — after virtually no public consultation — is to be submitted for planning permission is that it is frankly *terrible*.

The sculptor, James Butler, and architect William Bertram (who normally deals in luxury hotel interiors) propose a giant unicorn prancing on an irregular chunk of rock standing in a pool in the middle of the square's lawn and with spouts of water gushing in all directions. This confection has none of the formality, discipline and stylisation that is essential in a true public monument — and especially in so sensitive a setting.

I cannot think what the Queen has done to deserve so vulgar and risible a commemoration of her 40 years on the throne. Yet people who ought to know better — like the Royal Fine Art Commissioners — seem to take leave of their critical faculties when anything associated with royalty is discussed and seem sentimentally convinced that a fountain of whatever sort must be a boon. All the public has been shown so far is a crude sketch published in the *Daily Telegraph*, whose correspondent rightly compares it to the Lloyd's Bank equestrian logo. Well this is a gift horse which *ought* to be looked in the mouth.

But something even less appropriate — if that is conceivable — is proposed for a traffic island in the Strand on the corner of Duncannon Street. Here, to celebrate Lady Porter's 400-year reign, Westminster City Council wants to erect a 15ft-high "star". This curious piece of meaningless abstraction, which is vaguely reminiscent of the old gas board's Mr Therm, with long legs, was originally to be made of steel and perspex but now is to be of steel alone.



MONUMENTAL BLUNDER: The dismal 15ft-high star proposed for a traffic island in the Strand

As this logo will stand next to St Martin's-in-the-Fields and the West Strand Improvements, it scarcely seems a sympathetic neighbour to two distinguished Classical buildings by James Gibbs and John Nash. As the Georgian Group comments: "Its simplistic symbolism (symbolising precisely what is not clear) might have suited it for a site in Bucharest or some other Eastern Bloc capital 20 or 30 years ago, but it can hardly pass muster in central London in 1991."

But I end with real bathos. Following a visit by the mayor of the Tokyo suburb of Shinjuku to the People's Republic of Lambeth, that stalwart anti-racist authority proposes to erect a monument to one Soseki Natsume on Clapham Common — at the Japs' expense. This will consist of a bust of the deeply obscure Nippon novelist placed on top of a sub-Classical pedestal of numbing mediocrity. Local people are outraged that a piece of the common is to be taken away to commemorate someone of absolutely no significance locally or nationally — and, indeed, it is recorded that Natsume was thoroughly miserable during his brief stay in Clapham in 1900.

But, again, the real point is that the proposed monument is silly, ugly and thoroughly badly designed. Until something of the sophistication which was applied to the design of public monumental sculpture until the Second World War can be recovered, we are best off with no new monuments at all. And here, I suppose, we should be thankful that Lady Porter seems to have dropped her sycophantic scheme to erect a monument to her beloved Leaderene on the south side of Parliament Square. Or has she?

'Piloti'

Sporting Life

RACING'S absurd view of its own importance was never better illustrated than by the much-hyped *Racing Post-Racing World* Question Time debate on Valentine's Day.

With the ubiquitous Bruffscott jollying along the dismal proceedings, it took place against the portentous backdrop of a map of the world. This gave the lucky participants the illusion that they were at the headquarters of SMERSH in an early James Bond film; those who missed this thrill will be able to buy a video of the proceedings at a ridiculous £19.99.

A very different and less flattering mood prevailed the previous day when a Jockey Club team, including Question Time panellist Lord Hartington, presented racing's case for greater funding to the parliamentary home affairs committee. The unofficial word from Westminster since this submission is that the club's plea for the Government to end the levy system and award racing a royalty payment from the bookmakers' profits is now dead in the water due to the naive ineptitude with which the arguments were made.

MPs of all parties were more impressed by Hartington's amateurishness than by the force of his evidence, feeling that he looked out of his depth. The biggest laugh of the day came when he solemnly informed Keith Vaz that you don't necessarily need to be rich, white and titled to become a Jockey Club member. But time and time again the Portman Square delegation's belief that because they now have a fax machine and a paid chief executive they have acquired the status of a credible commercial organisation entitled to spend punters' money as they see fit was cruelly mocked — not just by avowed socialists like Alan Meale but by entrepreneurial Tories such as David Ashby too.

Furthermore, by sounding so vague about the figures and methods used to arrive at racing's new "ballpark" sum and by failing to concentrate on the stronger aspects of their case such as stable lads' pay, the weakness of the Tote and the monopoly power of the Big Three betting shop chains, Hartington and Christopher Haines succeeded in making the Jockey Club, rather than the bookmakers, seem like racing's biggest problem.

If Stoker is still in any doubt about the unpalatable world beyond the racecourse, he should seek out the former cabinet minister John Nott, who recently confessed that in his experience the Treasury couldn't care less about the quality of racing in Britain. As long as the Big Three continue to be as adept at luring mugs into the betting offices as they have been up until now, thus guaranteeing the Government's 8 per cent cut of the betting tax, Whitehall wouldn't be upset by a preponderance of races "between chimps in bathing suits". Now that would make an interesting video.

'Major Bonkers'

POLICE 5

THE RETURN to active duty of 22 members of the disgraced West Midlands serious crimes squad (SCS) could place criminals in the curious position of being arrested by people whom they might later meet in prison.

Chief Constable Ron Hadfield has slowly been bringing officers in from the cold after more than 50 were forced into lowly desk jobs when the squad was disbanded by Geoffrey Dear, Hadfield's predecessor, in 1989. This followed allegations of forged confessions and faked evidence — allegations that were confirmed in a series of dramatic appeal cases in which the squad's victims have been freed.

Hadfield has moved slowly to avoid attracting too much attention and started by returning four officers to duty last June. That caused a little stir but nothing too serious, so after a decent interval he moved another 17 back to active duty, 12 as detectives. Last November Hadfield admitted that the officers could still face disciplinary proceedings following the current inquiry by the Police Complaints Authority.

Most of those brought back were relatively junior. But two weeks ago Hadfield recalled Chief Supt Jim Byrne, former head of West Midlands CID and the SCS. He now controls one of Birmingham's biggest police divisions. At the same time Det Supt Roger Corbett was commended by Hadfield for his minor role in trapping a fellow officer later convicted of a murder plot. He remains deskbound but not for long, according to rumours.

Meanwhile the PCA is investigating 631 complaints by 90 people who claim they were victims of SCS "fit-ups". Twelve cases have already been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions and three men have been released by the appeal court.

A final report on all 90 cases is expected in April — but the SCS members are pretty confident of the report's findings: confident enough, in fact, to organise a reunion dinner for later that month and to invite all serving and retired officers. It has even been rumoured that Hadfield has been invited as guest speaker.

"Sorry, we don't serve food"

Royal Update

(BBC1)

UNDER cover of the Gulf War, the BBC has slipped in one of the most uncalled-for programmes of recent years.

Co-hosted by Adrian Mills, a former Rantzen eunuch on *That's Life*, and Ronald Allison, formerly the royal press secretary, *Royal Update* is a shameless piece of populist brown-nosing: a Buck House noticeboard which makes Sir Alastair Burnett look like a republican.

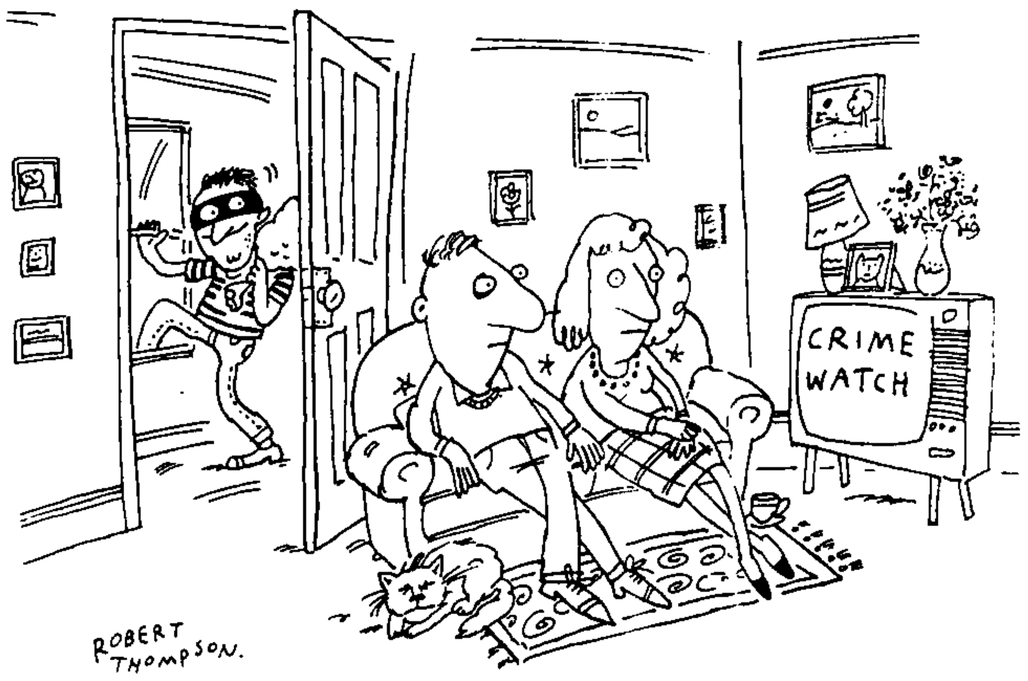
With both presenters in different ways castrated — Allison isn't going to squander his palace contacts by indiscretion; Mills will need at least another two years to get through Post-Rantzen Shock Syndrome — the chances of the programme being incisive were never high.

Mills and Allison sit primly in suits in a sort of Knightsbridge drawing room set. Boy next door and rich uncle, they look like a pilot for a gay version of *Terry and June*. Adrian, happy and shallow, reading the autocue with a touchingly earnest expression, explains that the programme will take the form of a studio discussion and phone-in every other week, with the intervening slots being used for the screening of film reports. Adrian entices the viewer with the prospect of "Behind The Scenes With Lord Linley" and "Inside Hampton Court". It is not stated, but the viewer assumes that these will be constructed according to the Birtian rules of news gathering.

Apparently with the same worry, Adrian asks Ronald to reassure him that the programme will not be about "gossip and scandal" but "hard facts". Ronald looks statesmanlike: "We're not in the gossip business." The ratings have plummeted, Ronald introduces the first film. It is newsreel footage of the death of the king: "For four days, 10,000 people paid him reverence in the only way they now could". For a programme with the word *Update* in its title, this seems an eccentric first item. It is unclear whether this is being presented as a news story.

"Very dramatic pictures, Ronald," comments Adrian afterwards.

"Very evocative," agrees Ronald.



"A nation stood still," comments Adrian.

"And indeed a world," remarks Ronald, emphasising his wider global perspective.

Ronald explains that, constitutionally, the queen was queen as soon as her father died. Therefore, because she was in Kenya, she was queen for some time before she knew she was. This insight might have been regarded as an update, but only if it had been broadcast in 1953.

Adrian puts on the "now-let's-be-serious" look which he learned at Dame Esther's breast. "Lot of criticism of the younger royals this week," he mutters. This is a reference to the celebrated constitutional document *The Orso Manifesto*, in which the peasant leader Andrew Neill set out his criticisms of the royal family being seen in West End restaurants during the Gulf War. He then waited in a West End restaurant for "the storm to break", hence the name Orso Manifesto.

Ronald explains that the Orso Manifesto is wrong. Clips of Di and Fergie visiting Gulf families are dropped in to support his argument.

"Very morale-raising," says Adrian.

"Yes," agrees Ronald.

Now there is time for a short phone-in. A woman asks who would have decided on the "unprecedented speech" by the Queen following *The Orso Manifesto*. Ronald explains gently that there was no speech. Might he just add that: "This sums up the difficulty for the Buckingham Palace press office."

The second caller wonders why the Queen doesn't pay income tax on her £1.8 million income a day. Ronald says he doesn't know where that figure comes from. Time is up. Next week: Inside Viscount Linley or is it Hampton Court?

What is the point of this programme? Previously, you would have said that it was a result of Paul Fox's desire to get a knighthood. But he was Sir Paul before the series began. Who wants one now?

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

READERS of the *Sunset Times* business section cannot have been surprised recently to see yet another diatribe against "a few Oxford elitists who no longer control what people see".

American hack Irwin Stelzer used his column on 17 February to rejoice that the television duopoly had been broken and that viewers could now enjoy "all manner of alternative entertainment" courtesy of BSkyB

At length Stelzer decried the "mandarins", "bureaucrats" and "socialists" who currently control television, expressing particular contempt for drama and educational programming. Predictably, satellite TV was praised to the skies for giving the public what it wants and Astra dishes are apparently "sprouting on houses throughout Britain". Indeed, the only surprise in the article, given its inordinate length, was that Stelzer completely forgot to mention his work as a paid consultant to Murdoch's BSkyB.

MEANWHILE as the number of Sky disconnections rockets, the ailing satellite TV company is finding it too costly to repossess unwanted dishes.

Many of those who took up free trial offers in the Murdoch press have cancelled their direct debits. In particular, those moving home have simply left without notifying Sky and have abandoned their dishes in the process.

In a desperate move to avoid having to retrieve its unwanted property, Sky has issued thousands of mailshots to "the occupiers" of abandoned Sky homes, pointing out the presence of the strange white object on the roof and suggesting that the new occupiers might like to use it — for a mere £24.95 a month for a minimum of 18 months.

CAP'N Bob may be glad to learn that geographical dyslexia is not confined to the hacks of the *Daily Mirror* (see *Eye* 760).

Shortly before the ground offensive started, ITN's brylcreemed political editor Michael Brunson was complaining to one young colleague that he couldn't understand the allies' determination to keep Israel out of the war. When the next Scud dropped on Jerusalem or Tel Aviv, he suggested, it would be sensible for Israel to invade Iraq and open up a second front.

Faintly embarrassed, the cub explained to his master that aside from any political considerations there was one small geographical obstacle to this masterplan: in spite of Brunson's belief to the contrary, Israel does not have a border with Iraq.

UNDER the Broadcasting Act, large television companies are not allowed to take over small TV companies on their borders.

Yorkshire TV, for example, is not meant to take over Tyne-Tees TV; but YTV now has a 20 percent stake in Tyne-Tees and its own people on its neighbour's board.

Insiders are worried that as soon as Tyne-Tees wins its franchise, it will merely roll-over and allow YTV a *de facto* takeover. YTV would get a healthy addition to its advertising revenue with no need to worry about Tyne-Tees programme-making which, remarkably, looks as though it is being run down.

CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
THEATRE
INOGAN WITH CLIVE ANDERSON
SHEPHERD'S BUSH GREEN
"KEEP YOUR HAIRPIECE ON, TERRY!"
"YOU ROTTERS! NEXT TIME I GO ON HOLIDAY I WANT MY SHOW DONE BY SOMEONE AS BAD AS ME!"
"OH, OK...
ROVER'S REPEAT
BAR
YOUR HOLIDAY'S CANCELLED!"
"Treble chins all round!"
KenRyne

I-SKY / BSB

If anyone thinks my view of Sky is influenced by writing for Rupert Murdoch's papers they have to be nuts.

WOODROW WYATT
Guardian

HOME is where the art is — the art of homemaking, that is!

And to launch our fabulous 12-page property pull-out we have a breathtaking £20,000 contest to make all your DIY dreams come true...

The sky's the limit — shop carefully and you'll probably have £300 left in your wallet for a **SATELLITE TV** system!

News of the World

CONTRIBUTORS: B.H. Jones, E. Strobes.

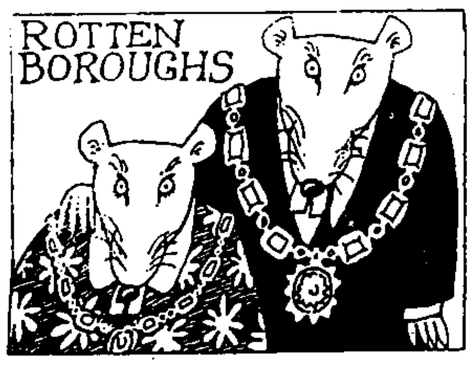
An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

CHANNEL 4's chief executive Michael Grade has done very well out of the current hoo-ha over ITV franchises even though he will not ultimately be involved with any of the bidding parties. Indeed, it is almost as if there has been a separate bidding process for the Michael Grade franchise.

A few weeks ago it was announced that Grade was considering an offer to lead the Carlton Communications bid for the Thames franchise in return for a golden hello reckoned to be somewhere between £1 million and £2 million. Channel 4 was so unnerved by the prospect of his departure that it took outside legal advice on how it could find a way to pay Grade more money than he is already receiving in order to keep him from Carlton's clutches.

The conclusion was that Channel 4 could alter Grade's status from that of director to employee and thereby pay him a massive golden hello of approximately half-a-million pounds for renewing his contract with them in addition to a substantially enhanced salary.

Of course, Grade has other motives for staying with Channel 4, such as the need to satisfy himself that he has increased its ratings performance (he hasn't); but his extraordinary enrichment is bizarre at a time when Channel 4 is lopping £14 million off its programme-making budgets and purchasing a fancy new building for £80 million.



STAFFORDSHIRE

THE long-awaited independent inquiry into Staffordshire county council's savage social services regime has been delayed yet again.

The findings of the inquiry team, headed by Cleveland barrister Allen Levy, were due six months ago but are now unlikely to appear before April.

Astute readers will recall that Levy's inquiry followed a series of revelations in the *Eye* over the last year into how Labour councillors had allowed county social workers to use the brutal and now discredited "pin-down" system of control for dealing with recalcitrant kids in council care.

Pin-down was the brainchild of Tony Latham, social worker extraordinaire, who was in charge of children's homes in Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke during the mid-1980s. Latham also received official approval to run, during his spare-time, a network of private companies supplying the council with a variety of social services sidelines. These unusual municipal practices, which fell under the corporate banner of "Fundwell" (*sic*), are currently being unravelled by the district auditor while Levy and Co examine the pin-down saga.

Although Latham has been on fully-paid sick-leave from Staffs county council since November 1989, his involvement with Fundwell continues unabated. He recently arose from his sick-bed to bid for a waste disposal licence and to make a planning application for a grandly-named waste transfer station in Stoke. The applications came in only days before Latham's special 12-month town hall permit to continue Fundwell ran out. The social services director who vouchsafed Latham, Barry O'Neill, retired on "health" grounds last December and has still not been replaced.

Once Latham's latest bid is rubber-stamped through Staffs council, he will be able to rekindle his interest in child labour, which previously led to young teenagers supposedly in "care" filling his skips behind council-run homes.

Meanwhile the Levy report is costing the authority more than £2,500 a day — and fresh complaints have been made to the local press about relatives finding 15 year olds at the council-run Pembridge Road home in Blurton in a tired and emotional state after a long session with officially-sanctioned liquor.

BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM councillors have overcome their embarrassment at being caught ripping off the city's poll tax payers in their notorious car pool scam.

As *Eye* readers will recall, auditors found that some of them were spending hundreds of pounds a month on taxis and chauffeured limousines, often on non-council business. Council leaders who self-righteously told officers to repay what they owed suddenly changed the rules when it came to their turn.

The new rules allowed them unlimited use and left the auditors in a quandary — should they judge the members under the new rules or the old?

The benevolent city fathers have solved the dilemma by back-dating the rule changes to 1987. It means no repayments — and the right to spend nearly £300,000 of poll tax payers' money each year is upheld.

SOUTHWARK

HALF-WITTED education chiefs in spartan Southwark, south London, have dreamt up an astonishingly useless package of cuts that could cost the council a small fortune.

Desperate to lop £650,000 from the education budget, confused Labour leaders claim that they have found the ideal money saver: slashing courses at Southwark College, the borough's only college of further education.

Once courses at Southwark are cut, students will have to travel to colleges run by other local authorities. Remarkably, Southwark does not seem to realise that it will then have to pay the education authorities for teaching its residents subjects they can no longer find at home, thanks to legislation which obliges councils to pay each other if they teach "outside" students.

But the move has an added sting in it's tail: Southwark's envisaged savings won't simply be eaten up by paying for their students to be taught at outside colleges — Southwark will also lose the huge income it currently recoups from teaching outside residents.

The current minimum sum for recoupment is £2,185 per full-time student per year; the maximum £3,488. Southwark's 10 per cent cut will mean an initial saving to the council of £650,000 — but it will also mean turning away some 470 students at a cost to the council of just over £1 million in lost recoupment fees!

FACT: Proportionately, Southwark has the lowest number in Britain of school-levers who take up tertiary education.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE

A STRANGE *contretemps* is threatening the cosy relationship between Inspector Knacker of South Yorkshire and the gruff, ferret-eating Labour councillors who nominally run the county police authority.

After years of peaceful co-existence, police committee councillors nearly sparked a mutiny among the ranks with its sudden and remarkable decision not to pay Knacker's legal bills at the coroner's inquiry into police antics at the Hillsborough football disaster in 1988.

Knacker, understandably, was dumb struck — but help was at hand. After the police authority meeting had finished, a few discreet but very meaningful telephone calls were made to key hacks in the national press. Within days, some of Fleet Street's grubbier local reps were asking extremely embarrassing questions around South Yorkshire about an alleged vice ring involving local councillors and other murky municipal misdemeanours concerning prominent town hall officials.

Naturally, Yorkshire's finest are keeping tightlipped about who tipped off the press or whether indeed the allegations contain a single grain of truth. Yet, remarkably, within weeks an amazing change had overcome the county police committee. It revoked its previous decision and decided to pay up Knacker's legal costs after all, claiming fresh information had come to light which had causes a complete *volteface*!

MURKEYSIDE

TERRY FIELDS, the pro-Militant Labour MP, has just tabled a Commons question asking why it takes Merseyside Fire Brigade up to 25 minutes to answer a 999 call.

Fields, an ex-fireman, should perhaps instead ask someone Militant still defends against "the lies and distortions of the capitalist press" — one Derek "Sekonda" Hatton.

Even after Degsy was expelled from the Labour Party he continued to hold the chairmanship of the Merseyside Fire Authority until he was barred from public office. During his tenure the brigade wanted to change from a mechanical system of mobilisation (which took three minutes at most) to a computerised one. However, its "computer working party on mobilisation" was surprised to learn that comrade Hatton had "already made up his mind" on an ICL system without consulting the firemen or putting it out to tender. Hatton was reluctantly persuaded to tender and after a perfunctory effort the contract went to... ICL.

Doubts were raised about the suitability of the ICL machines by the then chief fire officer Dennis Wilmott, brother-in-law of "Militant" guru Tony "Ayatollah" Mulhearn. Hatton told Wilmott "not to worry" about it as the ICL system was already being used by the AA. Wilmott observed that if people had to wait as long for the fire brigade as they did for the AA, their homes would be burnt to a cinder.

Installing the computer system caused big problems because the Fortek software was inappropriate.

Any ideas, Degsy?

MEANWHILE Alan "Dicksie" Dean, deputy leader of Liverpool City Council, having already backed down in a dispute last year with Nalgo over poll tax collection has been responsible for prolonging another dispute, this time with the NUT.

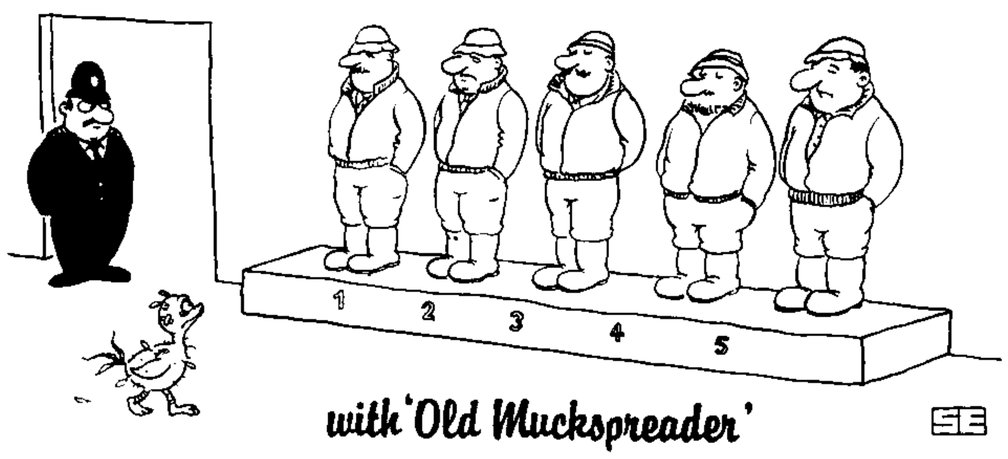
Eye readers may recall the case of teacher Alan Corkish, sacked from his job for allegedly making "sick jokes" about the Hillsborough disaster. Keva Coombes (*Eyes passim*) promised to reinstate him but was himself deposed a week afterwards by Dean and others, Dean going on to uphold Corkish's sacking.

The case is now a *cause célèbre* on Murkeyside, where the NUT has just had a three-day strike over it. While expenses expert Dawn Booth (chair of social services) says "believe the kids first", all six Liverpool MPs — from Fields to David Alton — are all calling for Corkish to be reinstated.

His school, Croxteth Comprehensive, is a fiefdom for the most lumpen elements of Militant and Corkish has been receiving the usual phoned threats ("We know where you live/we're coming to get you"), which is strange since he is ex-directory and only the school knows his number.

Jed McKean, head of the school, has warned Corkish supporters that he can no longer hold back "mean and nasty elements in the community" from doing damage to them. These "elements" have taken exception to people volunteering information to Inspector Knacker in his ongoing investigation of corruption on Murkeyside.

DOWN ON THE FARM



with 'Old Muckspreader'

ABOUT THE only grain of sense in Irish commissioner Ray MacSharry's daft plans to reform the common agricultural policy (CAP) was his recognition that most of the over-production comes from the big fat-cat farmers.

Among the biggest fat cats must be the firm Booker Farming, sod-turning offshoot of the £3 billion agribusiness multinational Booker plc. The city slickers who run Bookers farm more than 25,000 acres in partnership with landowners, which enables them to cream off millions of pounds in taxpayers' subsidies. Good business for the landowners, but an even nicer little earner for the chaps in pin stripes. They claim a return on capital three times higher than the average arable farm.

Now the smart operators at BF have come up with a wheeze for pocketing new government handouts aimed at bribing farmers to look after the countryside: they have launched a company called Booker Countryside.

The publicity blurb says BC was set up to "meet the challenge of a rapidly changing rural scene"; the real motive, of course, is that a whole battery of environmental subsidies are now up for grabs thanks to a government that thinks everyone but farmers should stand on their own feet.

The Cheltenham-based rural quango the Countryside Commission helped shape many of the new green subsidy schemes. So it's no surprise that retiring commission chairman Sir Derek Barber has been appointed to head the new board. At least he ought to know how to fill in the application forms.

Also on the board are James Douglas, former director-general of the Country Landowner's Association, the organisation whose main contribution to future rural policy is a plan to put cash registers on bridleways and picnic sites.

Another board member is broadcaster Chris Baines. We shall obviously not be seeing beguiling images of the new Booker landscapes on the BBC TV *Countryfile* programme he works on?

THE GOVERNMENT'S folly in breaking up the Nature Conservancy Council is becoming daily more apparent.

It was the council's scientists who came up with evidence showing how the subsidised afforestation of the Caithness Flow Country threatened a world-renowned natural habitat.

Fearful for her green image, Thatch was forced to close the tax loophole that encouraged the frenzy of conifer planting. In doing so she killed off a tax dodge much beloved by the nation's barristers, pop stars and chat show hosts, as well as destroying a popular little earner for a clutch of Tory landowners.

Determined to punish the NCC for having the gall to carry out its statutory obligation of sticking up for nature, the then environment secretary Nicholas Ridley announced that the internationally-respected agency was to be split into English, Scottish and Welsh sections. That would teach those pinko liberals at Peterborough.

Of course the official justification for this act of administrative vandalism was cost saving. However, the mandarins of Marsham Street are finding the policy increasingly difficult to defend. Last year the council's work of protecting wildlife sites, buying nature reserves and carrying out scientific research cost taxpayers £43 million. Following the Ridley streamlining the same programme is forecast to cost £65 million, chiefly because the administration has to be done in triplicate.

Still, it should guarantee Old Nick a free day on the grouse moors whenever he wants one.

THE secret postal ballot to find Ron Todd's successor at the T&G should be fun — particularly as the thieves and riggers involved in last year's secret postal ballot for the national executive council elections are still at large.

Inspector Knacker could start by insisting the T&G conducts itself within the letter of the law by giving the supervision of the postage, printing and distribution of ballot papers to the Electoral Reform Society, something the ERS did not enjoy last time.

He could also insist on checking the authenticity of the register of members to verify that all the 1,200,000 members actually exist. Regions including Northern Ireland, Merseyside and London should be carefully scrutinised because these areas recorded amazing turnouts in recent years in "democratic" workplace and branch ballots.

Official figures showing voters' participation prior to the secret postal ballot system recorded an amazing 80-90 per cent turnout in those regions.

The re-run executive ballot, held six weeks after the rigged ballot last year, was *not* rigged, according to the union. The *Eye* is happy to accept this but would still like to know how the Gibraltar branch (where rigging took place in the first ballot) enjoys a membership of 6,000 — one-fifth of the Rock's entire population. This means that once you take into account children, pensioners, the sick, housewives, school teachers, armed forces personnel, the self-employed and the unemployed, every working adult male on the Rock between 18 and 65 is a member of the T&G.

At a time of falling union membership, Gib's branch officers deserve rich praise, particularly as 1,000 of the Rock's members are Moroccans who speak no English. If other T&G recruitment officers could follow their example, Todd's national membership would be around 12 million.

PS: The Gibraltar branch comes under the jurisdiction of Transport House, where 100,000 spare ballot papers were stolen during the rigged ballot from an unlocked room under the nose of chief administrative officer Ray Collins.

HUNT NEWS

OXFORD hunt saboteurs meanwhile are up in arms about the conduct of Ian Howard Jones, whipper-in of the Bicester Hunt, who last September cropped a female saboteur, Alison Dunnett, twice around the head, causing heavy bleeding.

On 16 January he was charged with unlawful and malicious wounding and possession of an offensive weapon (a charge which the Crown Prosecution Service later changed to a breach of the peace with a request for a bindover). The case was heard at Bicester Magistrates Court on 16 January but before members of the Woodstock bench, since Jones knew all the Bicester bench socially. Indeed, a key defence witness was Captain Henry Miles Gosling, a former master of foxhounds and a former chairman of the Bicester bench.

Another defence witness, Liam Thon, couldn't recall which way Jones's horse had been pointing, despite his claim to have been only five yards away, and he said that Jones only hit Dunnett once. (Jones himself admitted hitting her twice, but claimed that she had been trying to drag him off his horse and that he had had no option but to strike her with his crop.) Cross-examined by the CPS, Thon gave a startling answer: "It was six months ago. What I can remember I can remember. The rest is vague. But I can remember the points I remember because Ian Jones asked me to remember those points."

The magistrates ruled that no breach of the peace had occurred because there was no balance of proofs that Jones was the initiator of the assault.

Three days following the hearing, the Bicester Hunt met at Thenford, Northamptonshire, and within 10 minutes another saboteur, Simon Ottino, was cropped and had to be taken to hospital. The circumstances were these. A rider approached a van belonging to the saboteurs and used his riding crop to smash the back window. When Ottino asked him for his name and address, the horseman rode at him, cropped him round the head, turned his horse and rode at him a second time, delivering another blow.

The rider has since been interviewed by police and is claiming that he struck at Ottino in self-defence. Charges have not yet been made, but the saboteurs believe the result of the Alison Dunnett hearing could have led this member of the hunt to think he could get away with his actions.

FOOTBALL NEWS

THE WORLD of football is rejoicing at the demise of Ken Bates, controversial Chelsea chairman, from one of the game's most powerful bodies, the Football League Management Committee.

For Bates this unsurprising kick in the teeth from fellow chairmen comes less than six weeks after the league found his club guilty of breaking rules governing "unofficial" payments to players.

The worst breach involved the club's brutish centre-half Graham Roberts (since transferred) and his imposing-looking gothic des. res. in Bridge of Allan, Scotland. Chez Roberts had been valued by estate agents at just over £120,000, yet a mysterious Guernsey-based company bought the property, two years ago, for nearly double that amount. Although Bates claimed that no funny money found its way from Chelsea to the player, Roberts has since engaged Messrs Sue, Grabbit and Runne to win back money he claims he was promised from the sale of the house.

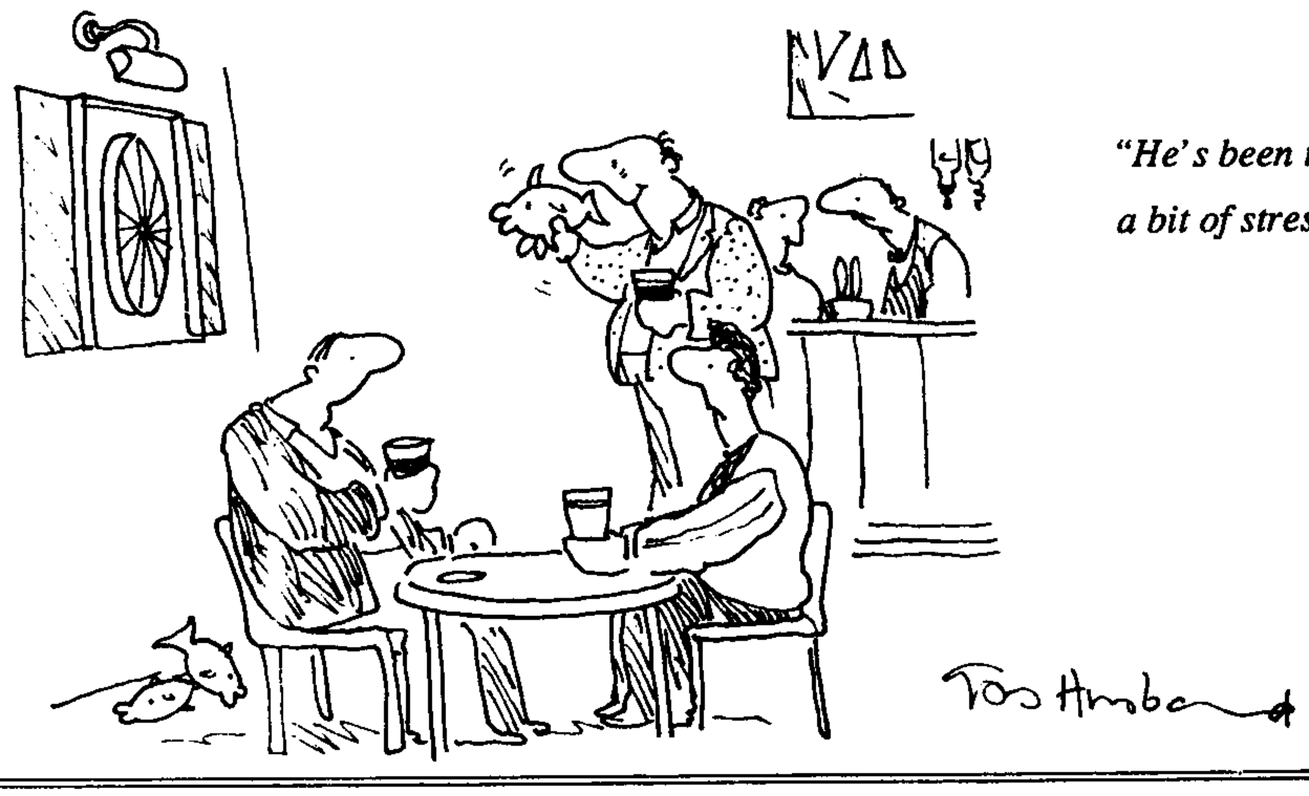
Such heinous crimes usually lead to the league demoting the club concerned a division or two. Yet this time the management committee, minus Bates, fined Chelsea £105,000 which, though a record sum, was seen as a piffling penalty for a club regularly watched by more than 20,000.

Bates's latest escapades are in character for this most notorious of club chairmen. After all, this is the man who once intended to surround the Chelsea pitch with a lightly-electrified fence "to prevent the scum from reaching the playing surface" though, strangely, not from reaching the directors' box. Knacker was not amused and the plan was dropped. Bates sprang to notoriety in the '70s when, as chairman of Oldham Athletic, he organised a summer tour of Rhodesia at the height of the Rumbabwe sovereignty row.

This time Bates took the news of Chelsea's culpability with his customary humility, slamming the league as "vicious and vindictive" and his former captain, Roberts, as a "tainted witness". Chelsea, he swore, was "100 per cent innocent". Yet, strangely, the club failed to appeal and Bates, despite vowing that he would not quit the management committee, resigned within two weeks only to announce that he was running for re-election. If Bates was confused his peers, at least, weren't, voting him off in favour of little-known Leeds director Maxwell (sic) Holmes.

Coincidentally, the allegations against Chelsea first surfaced in the Cap'n Bob-owned *Daily Mirror* which continued to pour on the vitriol after he was found guilty. In his spare time, the good captain is, of course, chairman of rival First Division team Derby County.

Perhaps Maxwell was simply annoyed that Bates had not been kicked out of football as was the Swindon chairman when the west country club was found guilty last year of similar misdemeanours and demoted to Division 3 having just won promotion to the 1st Division! Although the punishment was commuted to staying in the 2nd Division, Swindon claims the decision cost them millions. Chelsea's fine works out at roughly the equivalent of the gate receipts from one badly attended match.



"He's been under a bit of stress"

Sally Deedes

A DISCOVERY that could help cut the number of cot deaths in Britain has been sat on by the Department of Health for more than a year.

Barry Richardson, of Penarth Research in Guernsey, has found that some of the chemicals used to make the fire retardant dressings found in babies' mattresses can, in certain circumstances, give out potentially lethal gases.

Mr Richardson, experimenting on mattresses from cots in which babies had died, found a fungus which, combined with the nitrogen compounds in a child's perspiration, can produce the gases.

In the *Lancet* last March he explained the technicalities of the chemical reaction: "Phosphine was generated from infected cotton and foam samples apparently through biodeterioration of phosphate fire retardant treatments. Foam and cotton samples were also infected by various other fungi, especially in the area affected by dribble. Many of these fungi produce asthmatic reaction."

He added that the gases are heavier than air and that the infants most at risk are those who spend long periods lying in their cots on their fronts or those who are heavily wrapped and so "in long and close breathing contact with the accumulation of gas".

According to his research heavy wrapping also induces overheating, which increases the generation of gas. Some infants probably survive because the first symptom of poisoning is a headache: this causes irritability which leads to bedding being dislodged and thus improved ventilation. Small infants, however, cannot dislodge their bedding.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), the technical term for cot death, occurs mainly in heavily-wrapped, overheated infants up to five months old who sleep on their fronts. But cot deaths appear only to be reported in western countries where foam and PVC-covered mattresses are used. The syndrome was recognised in 1969 — about 15 years after these materials were introduced.

There is much circumstantial evidence to back up Mr Richardson's claims. It is reported that cot deaths are less likely to occur among first-born children, possibly because their mattresses are often new and do not become infected while the infant is young and most at risk. In the 45 incidents investigated, five first born children were involved, two dying on previously used mattresses. One of these slept on a mattress immediately after it had been used by an older child. One infant died on a new foam mattress which was generating phosphine.

Despite the considerable fears, the Government has not chosen to alert the population. Research has shown that cot deaths may have a variety of causes, but as Mr Richardson points out, the incidence of SIDS has risen since the use of fire retardants became law in 1986. A government inquiry prompted by his findings was announced in March last year, led by Professor Paul Turner, chairman of the government's Independent Advisory Committee on Toxicity.

But despite persistent nudgings it has yet to publish its findings. Last August a Mr Dibb, administrative secretary for the health department, explained: "The research results will be available within the next two months and the report published as soon as possible thereafter."

This week a department spokeswoman said: "A lot of claims were made which were unsubstantiated and which have to be investigated. This takes some time. We will publish our findings shortly."

Mr Richardson points out that it took him only three months to carry out exhaustive trials. During cold weather — in which babies are wrapped tightly — every day of delay can represent between five and 10 deaths.

Meanwhile the Department of Trade and Industry, responsible for the introduction of fire regulations, is reluctant to recognise the possible connection between the number of cot deaths and the introduction of new rules. "It may indeed be possible," says a letter from the DTI, "that additives other than fire retardant chemicals may be the source of these gases."

SPART UPDATE

TO her talents as an actress and revolutionary theoretician, Vanessa Redgrave has now added a new skill — as spycatcher. According to the Redgrave fanzine *The Marxist*, at a meeting on 16 November 1990 she proposed that one Corinna Lotz "be expelled from the International Committee of the Fourth International and from the Marxist Party as a proved agent provocateur, who has been such for at least one year". The proposal was "agreed unanimously" by those few remaining members of the Committee who hadn't themselves already been expelled.

Even more sensationally, Vanessa's magazine announces that a "Commission of Inquiry" is pursuing investigations into "all the circumstances surrounding the death of our Comrade Gerry Healy on 14 December 1989". Healy was the veteran leader of the Workers' Revolutionary Party, which split in 1985 after some members finally objected to his long-established habit of raping the more comely "young female comrades". It has been suggested that sexual over-indulgence may even have hastened his end. But the loyal Vanessa will have none of this: the 1985 split, she says, was the work of "MI5, MI6 and the Special Branch, the CIA, BOSS and MOSSAD", and "it was these State agencies that killed him".

Inspector Redgrave's investigation into Healy's murder may be hampered by the fact that she has simultaneously antagonised a crucial witness: Healy's secretary, chauffeuse and companion for his last four years was Corinna Lotz.

Even some of Vanessa's greatest fans seem unimpressed by her forensic skills. Several of them signed an advertisement in the *Grauniad* on 26 January, headed "In Defence of Democratic Rights", which said that the accusation against Lotz smacked of "the methods of a military dictatorship". (The simile was unfortunate: given Gerry Healy's infatuation with the likes of Saddam Hussein, Muammar Gaddafi and even Idi Amin, his disciples may not regard comparison with "military dictatorship" as an insult.)

Curiously, the signatories included Ken Livingstone MP. Yet only a few months ago, in a fulsome tribute to his "friend" Gerry Healy, Ken said: "I haven't the slightest doubt that the upheavals that split apart the Workers' Revolutionary Party... were a sustained and deliberate decision by MI5 to smash that organisation because they feared it was becoming too pivotal." Has someone finally whispered in his ear that such tales from the Redgrave Sparts may not be entirely reliable after all?

Letters

Crude

Sir,

Unfortunately I am writing to you to protest against a recent article that appeared in your 15 February issue of Private Eye. In the article you suggested that on my recent trip to India I attempted to dupe the Indian government into buying Iraqi crude oil stored on Iraqi tankers docked in Libyan ports. There is no truth whatsoever in this. Any activities in India were limited to enhancing the exports of Indian basic commodities to Middle Eastern markets. We do promote countertrade and barter incentives to achieve these goals and we must take into consideration all relevant commodities, one of which is oil.

However, we transact these operations within joint venture partnerships with several of the most reputable and respected trading companies in the world. Until now we have never traded Iraqi crude oil neither post sanctions nor pre sanctions.

The allegation such as the one you have suggested is highly destructive and harmful to both my personal status, my character as a Saudi citizen. I have, and always will, stand by my country in times of difficulty, thus the sanctions imposed by the United Nations. And secondly, these sorts of aspersions harm the reputation of my company. I therefore urge you to reassess the "facts" upon which your reporter based his dispatch. Through careful screening of the reports you will realise that a serious breach of journalistic ethics has occurred.

In the future please feel free to contact us when there is doubt about articles that are to be published concerning us.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact my son Mohamed Khashoggi by telephone.

Yours sincerely,
ADNAN KHASHOGGI,

Blakes Hotel, Kensington.

One in the teeth

Sir,

Bryher Scudamore of That's Life confirms in her letter (Eye 761) that the Newbury Weekly News carried the story of Cadman's arrest in March 1989. That's Life first broadcast on the subject two months later.

When the Newbury Weekly News published its exclusive story, a Newbury police spokesman said: "A report is currently with the Crown Prosecution Service and we are awaiting the return of that file."

We were first. Mrs Teeth was second. That's life.

Yours faithfully,
LAURENCE CUMMINS,

Editor, Newbury Weekly News Group, Berkshire.

"That's no lady!"

Uncommentator

Sir,

Re: Francis Tusa

The above has never been on BBC TV. He has appeared solely on ITV and Channel 4. This is precisely because his father holds the position he does.

Francis Tusa is around 25 and has the advantage over other "experts" that he is able to condense his remarks into the quick, concise sentences ideal for TV interviews — notice how older chaps tend to ramble. My son is slightly acquainted with him — the only fault I had to find is his expression "battle-hardened Iraqi army" which was much in evidence last August!

What a pity you never seem to check your facts thoroughly. Silly mistakes like this give people the idea that you are sloppy, and that is why you get taken to the cleaners by Mrs Ripper etc.

That joke about the undertakers at Heathrow was terrible. Remember you are read by men serving in the Gulf.

F.M. CHRUSCIEL (Mrs),

Tonbridge, Kent.

Sub lieutenant

Sir,

I am not a serving soldier in Saudi Arabia nor indeed anywhere else, but I have been disgusted by the constant stream of letters complaining about the Newman cartoon.

Furthermore, I am deeply shocked by all the animal loving ("they enjoy being killed") readers who whinge on about your entirely decent coverage of the hunting issue. Basic moral law dictates that you cancel all these people's subscriptions immediately so the rest of us do not have to suffer their deluded ramblings.

Yours faithfully,
NICK BIRD,

Lowestoft, Suffolk.

Debag

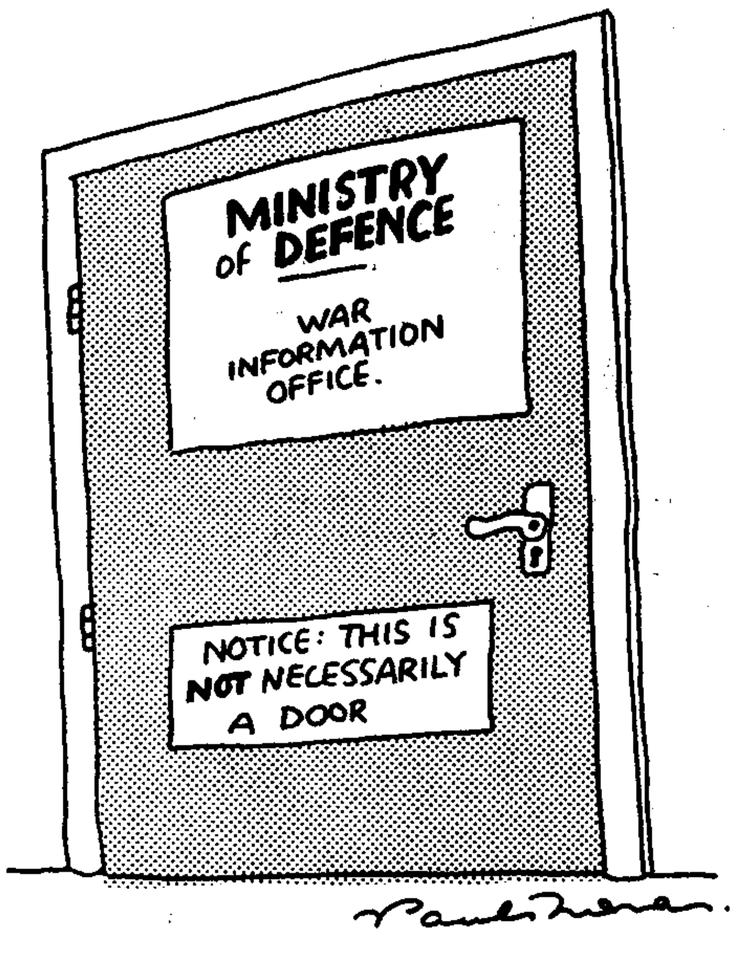
Sir,

What an old windbag Major T.A.E. Pollock (shurely shome mishtake? Ed) is. As a member of the armed forces he is presumably well-versed in the art of killing people. Heaven forbid that any namby-pamby cartoonist like Newman should be forthright enough to make a serious statement about the consequences of Bollocks & Co's actions.

Accept my subscription forthwith.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID REID,

North Humberside.



O.B.N.

It began as a leading article in this newspaper. By the end of the week, the world's media had joined in the debate and not only the role of the royal's in the country's Gulf war effort, but their very relevance today had been brought into question.

BRIAN MacARTHUR
(on his employer Andrew Neil's editorial in the Sunday Times)

Labour's Gerald Kaufman is well known in political circles for his sharp brain and brilliant debating skills. On the Gulf he's always on top of his brief and hasn't flinched from taking on Saddam.

There's more to Britain's future foreign secretary, though, than just wisdom. In private, he's very witty and has written one of the funniest books on politics I have ever read — How To Be A Minister.

And he's worldly, too. During a visit with him to Moscow I discovered that he can not only sing by heart the songs from any musical worth knowing but, through long and happy association, he's also become a passionate expert on ice cream. Who could ever say he wasn't just a statesman but a fully paid-up member of the human race, too?

PETER MANDELSON (former adviser to Neil Kinnock)
People

Submitted by E. Strobes, R.A. Orridge.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Grand Prix

Sir,

Re issue 761 and the NF's Mr Kelvin Sanderson's letter. I feel that the organisation to which he belongs is THE *sickest thing I have come across.*

Secondly, with reference to Reid Thomas's letter (same issue). Perhaps he forgets that a certain previous recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, Mr Henry Kissinger, received the award after unleashing the biggest bombing campaign in history against Cambodia, a country not involved in the Vietnam War.

Yours faithfully,
A.R. McGREGOR,

London N7.

Boy wonder

Sir,

Now that the dust has settled around the Newman cartoon of Heathrow Arrivals, may I offer a personal reminiscence of the artist?

For some years I had the function of editing an insignificant and pedestrian trade magazine for Haymarket Publishing, which I am happy to say earned the criticism, from several ambitious rivals, of being "boring and lifeless". During that time, Mr Newman spent a brief period with us as a trainee, and owing to his vigorous pursuit of admissions of error from trade personalities, instead of accepting perfectly cogent handouts from their PRs, gained the sobriquet of "Fearless Nick Newman", which you will understand was far from complimentary.

His subsequent career as cartoonist is in the same vein and I am impressed by the fact that he follows in the tradition of Hogarth, Daumier and Rowlandson in drawing our attention to painful facts, without regard for convention or popularity.

What a pity it is that he has so little talent as an artist.

I hope you will find this letter too boring to publish.

Tediously yours,
ANDREW BLUHM,

Thames Ditton, Surrey.

Swiss rôle

Sir,

Why do so many of your readers cancel their subscriptions on the grounds that you make tasteless and offensive jokes?

Surely we all subscribed to your organ in the first place precisely because it is tasteless and offensive?

Yours,
PETER TALLON,

Geneva, Switzerland.

Search me!

Sir,

I note with interest your reference to Searchlight as a "much respected" magazine. Can this be the same Searchlight whose information on two Conservative MPs, provided for the Panorama programme "Maggie's Militant Tendency", cost the BBC half a million pounds in court costs and libel payments?

And is it still edited by that great democrat and convicted burglar Mr Gerry Gable, a former local election candidate for the Communist Party of Great Britain?

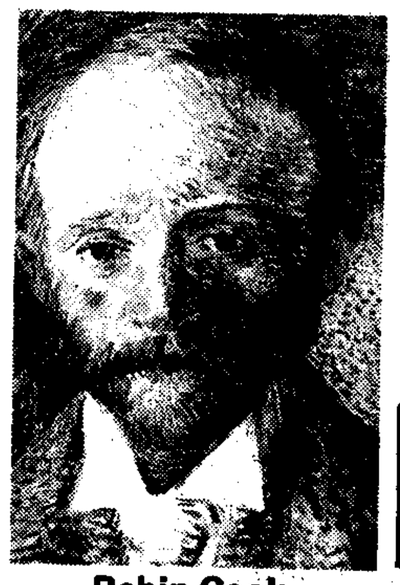
And finally, is it the same Searchlight which published a glowing obit of 'anti-fascist' Harry Bidney without mentioning his convictions for pimping and the homosexual rape of under-age boys?

I think we should be told!

Yours,
MICHAEL SHERMAN,

Western Goals Institute, London E15.

Lookalike



Robin Cook

Alexander Reid

Sir,

Does your Lookalike section include reincarnations? This portrait of a prototype Robin Cook is on display in the Van Gogh exhibition in Glasgow.

Yours faithfully,
JUDITH A. DUNCAN,

Dunfermline, Fife.

"Says he was going a-courting, Sarge!"

I-SPY

Submitted by Peter Sewell. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Sky Piloti

Sir,

I suppose the two things in Private Eye I have always enjoyed the most are the Dear Bill letters and Piloti's assaults on architectural philistines; but I want to speak in defence both of the admirable Canon Gibbs and also of the Diocese of Sheffield. If Piloti's slanted facts in this instance are anything to go by, then perhaps he is not as well-informed on other buildings either. If that is so, then more's the pity.

I chaired the commission that proposed after a thorough and exhaustive inquiry and with considerable reluctance the closure of Christ Church Doncaster; one of the chief grounds being that the centre of Doncaster could not sustain the long-term maintenance of two large parish churches, each with only a small congregation, and each requiring considerable sums of money to be spent on their buildings. If the choice had to be made, then St George's was the church with major architectural significance and also crucial to the town's identity.

Christ Church is in poor condition and I believe that the figure of £196,000 estimated by English Heritage is a considerable long-term under-estimate. (The PCC WAS *informed by the way of the building's eligibility for grant aid).*

The diocese has attempted to gain planning permission for alternate use that would preserve the building and make it financially viable to an appropriate purchaser: but such planning permission has not so far been forthcoming. It is perfectly silly to call this asset-stripping; and if a better site for a new parish church is found more centrally in the parish — far from running down the parish it forms an opportunity to build the worshipping community up.

Incidentally, Canon Gibbs did not build an extension to Cantley Church without planning permission. The planning oversight lay in the roof tiles used. The inspector has now granted approval for these on appeal.

Yours faithfully,
BISHOP OF DONCASTER,

Rotherham.

Pulse hating

Sir,

Pat McGlashan queries (Eye 759) whether Old Muckspreader is interested in facts and then proceeds to adduce some highly selective ones of her own.

Admittedly, Vegetarian Soc. revenue has increased, but only as a result of selling its London property and a timely intervention by the Charity Commissioners was necessary to prevent a sale at less than the full market value.

The reported membership increase of 120 per cent sounds great, but this has been at the expense of increasing the youth membership on which the Vegetarian Soc. loses money and latterly of a declining adult membership.

Pat McGlashan suggests that Vegetarian Soc. approbation saves veggies "from having to read labels". Not if they are interested in what they eat, it doesn't. Such is the society's desire to garner funds from commercial interests that it was quite happy endorsing a product which contained 15 per cent salt at the same time as its research section warned of the dangers of over-consumption of salt.

This reader isn't "bored stiff" by the effort of Alan Long to show up the crass incompetence of the bigots who run the Vegetarian Soc.

Yours faithfully,
A. VEGGIE,

Croydon.

ICU2

Sir,

A common error has crept into Backbiter's reference to the electricians' union: he calls it EEPTU and the two letters TU at the end of the acronym might suggest to some that it is a trade union. It should, of course, be EETPU (pronounced eat-poo) and is easily remembered because the two letters at the end, PU, are the chemical formula for plutonium which many of its members spend their working lives in manufacturing.

The appearance of its nominees at Labour Party selection meetings should surprise no one. A man everyone knew turned up on a similar occasion in Dulwich. He was the local chemist. He explained that he was an electrician because he sold torch batteries.

Yours,
MEG A. WATT,

London SE.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"It's a good job I'm not colour blind because both teams are playing in black and white."

HARRY GRATION, Radio 5
(Joe Derek)

"Your ambition, is that right — to abseil across the Channel?"

CILLA BLACK, ITV
(Paul Maggs)

"We've got some good players and so have they — that's the difference."

AUSTRALIAN RUGBY OFFICIAL, BBC1
(K. Molloy)

"It was a game of three halves."

STEVE DAVIS, BBC1
(P. Howard & T. Lucas)

"There's one that hasn't been cancelled because of the Arctic conditions — it's been cancelled because of a frozen pitch."

BOB WILSON, BBC1
(Anon)

Letter from **Japan**

from Our Own Correspondent

OF OUR country's gallant pledge to contribute $11 billion to the allied war effort in the Gulf, only $1.4 billion has so far been handed over. As for the rest, our government has had to overcome enormous opposition to get it through the Diet.

Our government seems to have been indulging in the traditional Japanese game of *mikire-hassha*, or making a decision before an issue has been fully debated. By making its pledge to the coalition forces in public, the government counted on opposition parties accepting the *fait accompli* in order not to make Japan lose face in the eyes of the world.

But the plan nearly backfired: a poll at the end of January showed that the majority of Japanese — 53 percent against 45 percent — were against the financial contribution. The opposition parties raised such a stink over the issue that for a while it looked as though the necessary money would not pass the opposition-held upper house.

Only a deal with the minority Komei party, which holds the balance of power, seems to have secured the necessary votes and Toshiki Kaifu's position as prime minister has been saved.

But the price has been a dear one. In return for its support, Komei has demanded that the new pledge of $9 billion must not be used for weapons and ammunition. This will therefore be one of the conditions laid before the management committee of the Gulf Peace Fund, a body set up by our government and six Gulf states to handle equitable distribution of Japan's cash. The Komei party also demanded that next year's defence budget must be cut.

This has blunted the victory for the hawks, who are pleased that Japan has a chance to contribute to an overseas war effort, however obliquely, but are not so pleased at the prospect of defence cuts. The hawks now pin their hopes on a move to send military C-130 transport planes to Amman to ferry refugees to Cairo. This would be the first time any military personnel have been sent overseas since the Second World War and would set a precedent.

Yet many of us wonder why these huge lumbering machines, which will require at least three refuelling stops to reach the Middle East, are necessary. Jordanian Airways has several commercial jets sitting idle and would gladly lease them out. In fact, many Japanese citizens, opposed to our government's use of military planes, have been doing just that, with great success.

Our other contribution to the multinational effort has been the dispatch of medical teams. Alas, although 100 doctors and nurses were supposed to have been sent out to Saudi Arabia last August, only 26 volunteered. Their ambulances could not be driven on Saudi roads because the steering wheels were on the wrong side; they had orders not to go anywhere near the front lines if war broke out; and in the end they spent most of their time giving medical lectures in the desert. Their contracts expired just before the war broke out in January and they have all returned home ingloriously.

Ever since, our government has desperately been looking around for replacements; but to date only about 10 brave medical staff have volunteered.

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE

Illuminated by Bert Kitchen

"WE ARE seeking an exemplary sentence," said Mr Polgar Rado, prosecuting on behalf of the Lodz Traffic Authority, "because, having been arrested for driving his unregistered BMW car at 150 kilometres an hour, Mr Jaliska Leszny was given a breath test, in the course of which the newly acquired breathalysing machine belonging to the Wola police exploded when he blew into it."

"WE SAW what we took to be a terrorist disguised as a woman attacking a security officer outside the river entrance of the Iraqi embassy," said Colonel Frace Zamaet of the Egyptian Security Police.

"However, our investigators discovered that the disturbance had been caused by a married couple, Mr and Mrs H.J. Rubai; Mr Rubai having bet Mrs Rubai £3 that she could not swim the Nile, and Mrs Rubai beating him after she had won the bet and he had refused to pay up."

ASKED to explain their behaviour, Mr Tom Graves said: "I drove over to Glasgow to discuss a family wedding with my cousin, Bob. After a while, Bob said: 'This is quite boring. Why don't we get active?' So we went on a shoplifting spree."

IN HIS report, Constable Rodway Five claimed: "We were escorting Mr Parry from prison to Tappham Hospital. On the way he suffered what looked like a heart attack. He went blue. He found it hard to breathe. He clutched his chest.

"Nevertheless, the moment I opened the back doors, Mr Parry made a very remarkable recovery. He leapt to his feet, out of the van, and over a ditch, and was last seen running at top speed towards Yoke Wood."

DISMISSING the Lunacy suit brought by Mr O.P. Saxena, a Calcutta lawyer, against India's Prime Minister Mr V.P. Singh, District Judge Mohammed Shamin said:

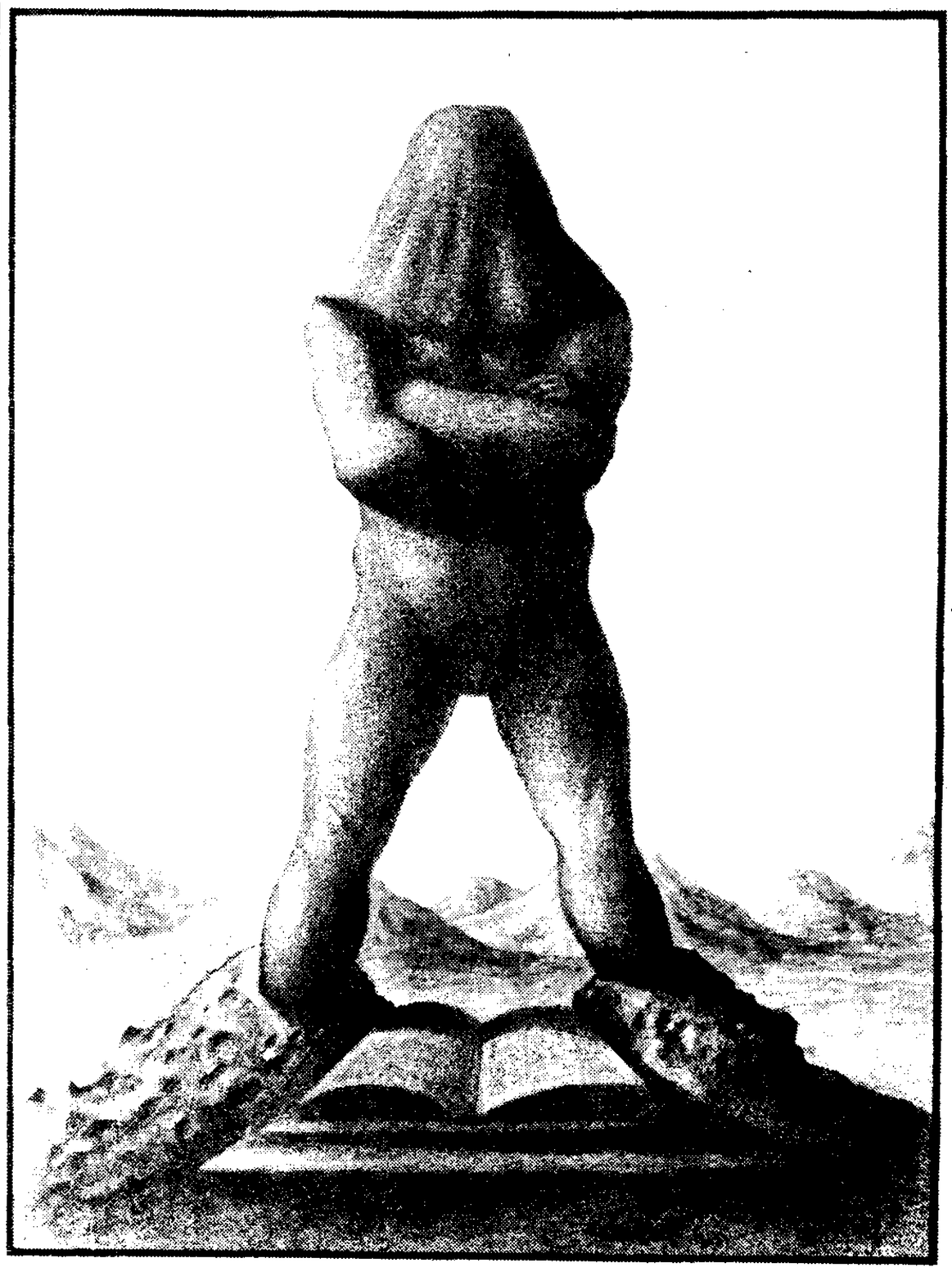
"In my view a prime minister does not require a certificate to prove he has never suffered from lunacy. As for the charge that Mr Singh makes contradictory remarks on the same day, this fact, in most political circles, is considered to be a mark of normalcy rather than madness."

AS PART of his call to the entrants for his YEAR ENDER MIND BENDER *crossword, Crypto, the Sunday Tribune's setter, announced: "As you sit tight with only a fortnight to go before the results, 45 across:* EPSOM DERBY WINNER 1986 (10) *is a problem. The answer, 'Shahrastani' has 11! So just drop the second 'h' and everything else will fit. No penalties for wrong answers if the right answer is wrong."*

HIRED to play at Pip's Eastbourne night spot, the Pink Xtremes' lead singer, D'Melo, decided to heighten his performance by collapsing to the floor and continuing to play while writhing about.

"At the given moment," said his fellow musician, Philip Rose, "he hurled himself down and began to writhe, but unfortunately he broke his guitar in the fall and no sounds came from it. As this got a substantial laugh, D'Melo leapt up and tried to smash the guitar against the club's wall. But the guitar just bounced off the wall, hit him on the nose and made it bleed.

"After this we went home."



DEFENDING his statue of the Welsh poet W.H. Davies, the sculptor Mr P. Kincaid said: "The fact that the poet was short, one-legged, and his most famous lines recommend staring about, and my statue shows a ten-feet-tall, two-legged figure with a cloth over its head is irrelevant. It is a visually dramatic memorial of a man trying to get back to his roots."

INFORMATION: BBC E. Europe News Summary 14.11.90; Jakarta Post 13.12.90; Stirling Observer 14.11.90; Financial Times 2.1.91; Calcutta Telegraph 23.10.90; Sunday Tribune 30.12.90; Eastbourne Herald 17.11.90; Western Mail 9.11.90.

MONITORS: A. Burgess, G.J. Govier, M. Ahmed, Jack Preger, Kevin Quinn, Anon, D. Jones.

An exhibition of Bert Kitchen's work as painter, book illustrator and Eye contributor opens on 27 March at Smith's Gallery, 28 Neal Street, Covent Garden, London WC2.

WEDDING OF THE CENTURY

HOW THEY ARE RELATED!

Karlo Maria von Weber = Dame Marie Lloyd

David Lloyd-George = My Father

Joshua Lloyds-Bank = Dame Nellie Warbler ("The Chelsea Songbird")

André van der Meegeren = Danny La Rue

Sir Edward Elgar = Nigella Kennedy

Sir Yehudi Lloyd-Menuhin = Mrs Beatrice Webb

Andrew Lloyd-Webber =

Sir Jocelyn de Gridiron = Lady Laetitia Fetlock

Sir Ferdinand Mount = Dame Gwendolen de Jodhpur

Red Rum = Captain Mark Phillips

Mr Desert O'Rchid = Lucinda Prior-Engagement

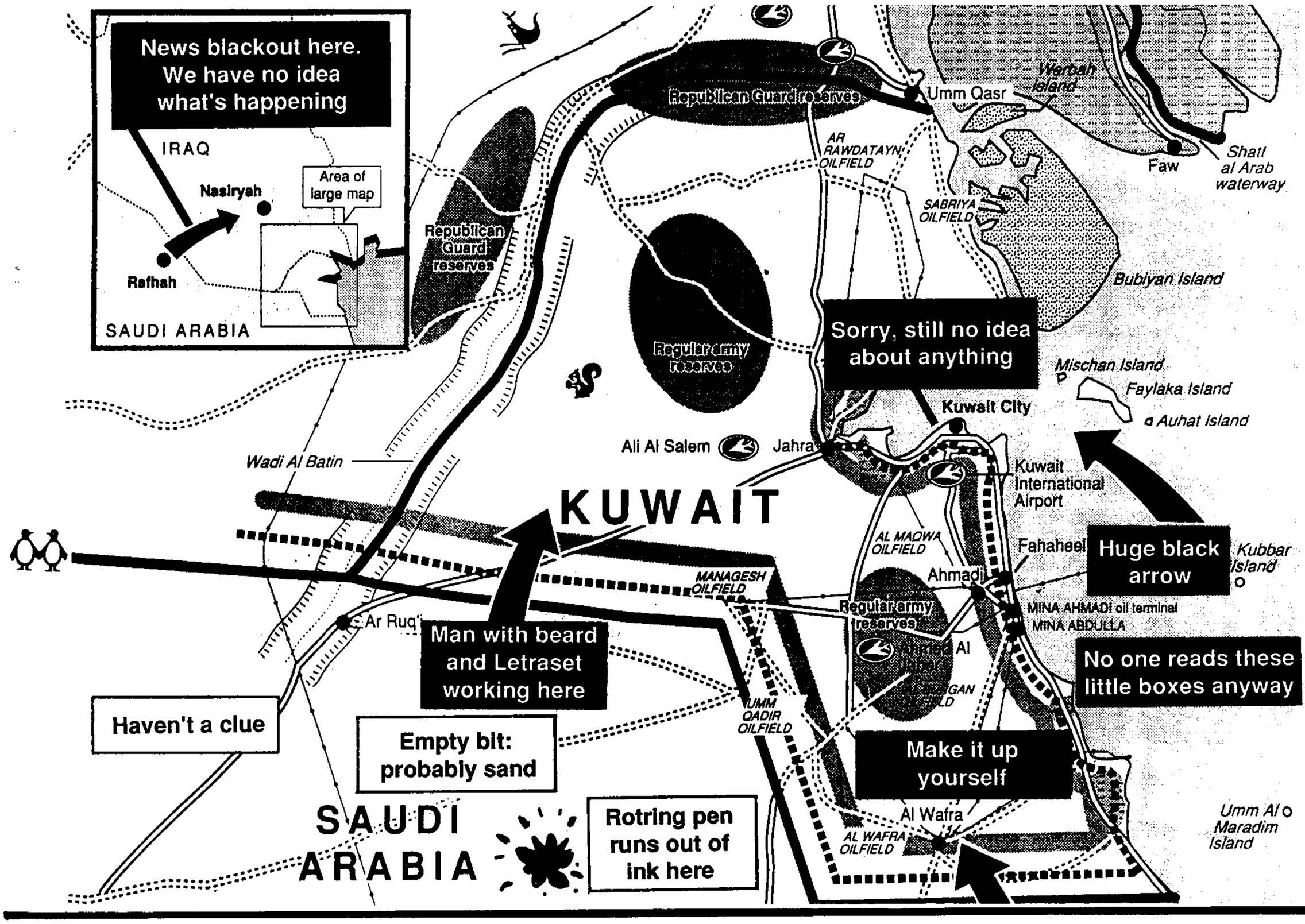
Herr Paul Schockemöhle = Madeleine Proust

Dick Francis = Princess Anne

Maddy Gurdon

3 a.m. SPECIAL

HUGE SPACE-FILLING GRAPHIC GOES IN!!



The Funday Times

The Decadent Monarchy

It is not often that this comic feels obliged to comment on the behaviour of the Royal Family, but it has become apparent from recent nursery rhymes that the monarchy is no longer living up to the high moral standards that we, the nation's children, expect.

Firstly there has been the much-publicised involvement of Royal figures with tarts. The fact that the Queen of Hearts has been frivolously baking tarts at a time of national crisis is bad enough. For the knave to then steal these tarts is even worse. For the King of Hearts to attempt to keep the tart scandal out of the public eye can only be described as disgraceful.

But that is not all. Recent accounts of Old King Cole merry-making in the early hours of the morning while smoking noxious substances in a pipe and being entertained by three fiddling "companions" have again lowered the reputation of the House of Cole in the public's estimation.

The King, in another incident recorded in our sister paper *Mother Goose*, was seen eating a hugely expensive wild-fowl pie containing, according to one witness, a staggering four and twenty live blackbirds. In the midst of a recession such outrageous and insensitive profligacy deserves severe censure.

As does — dare one say it? — Her Majesty the Queen, sitting idly in her parlour regularly scoffing bread and honey. A spokesman for the Palace confirmed the story, but said that the King could not comment, as he was in his counting house, counting out his money.

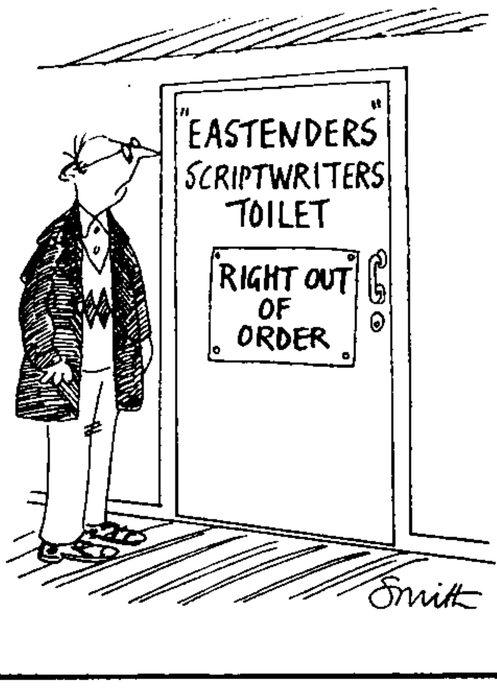
Surely the time has come for such money to be taxed. Indeed we must go further and insist that the monarchy should in all respects be accountable to its bedtime-story-reading public. And anyone who suggests that these stories are merely fairy tales should try reading the rest of the paper.

© Andy Pandy

ON OTHER PAGES

Royal Engagements

- **Duke of York to march 10,000 of our boys up and down the hill.**
- **All the King's horses and men to assist with emergency egg casualties.**
- **Queen to receive pussy-cat in morale-boosting exercise.**



That Gulf coverage in full

Day 194

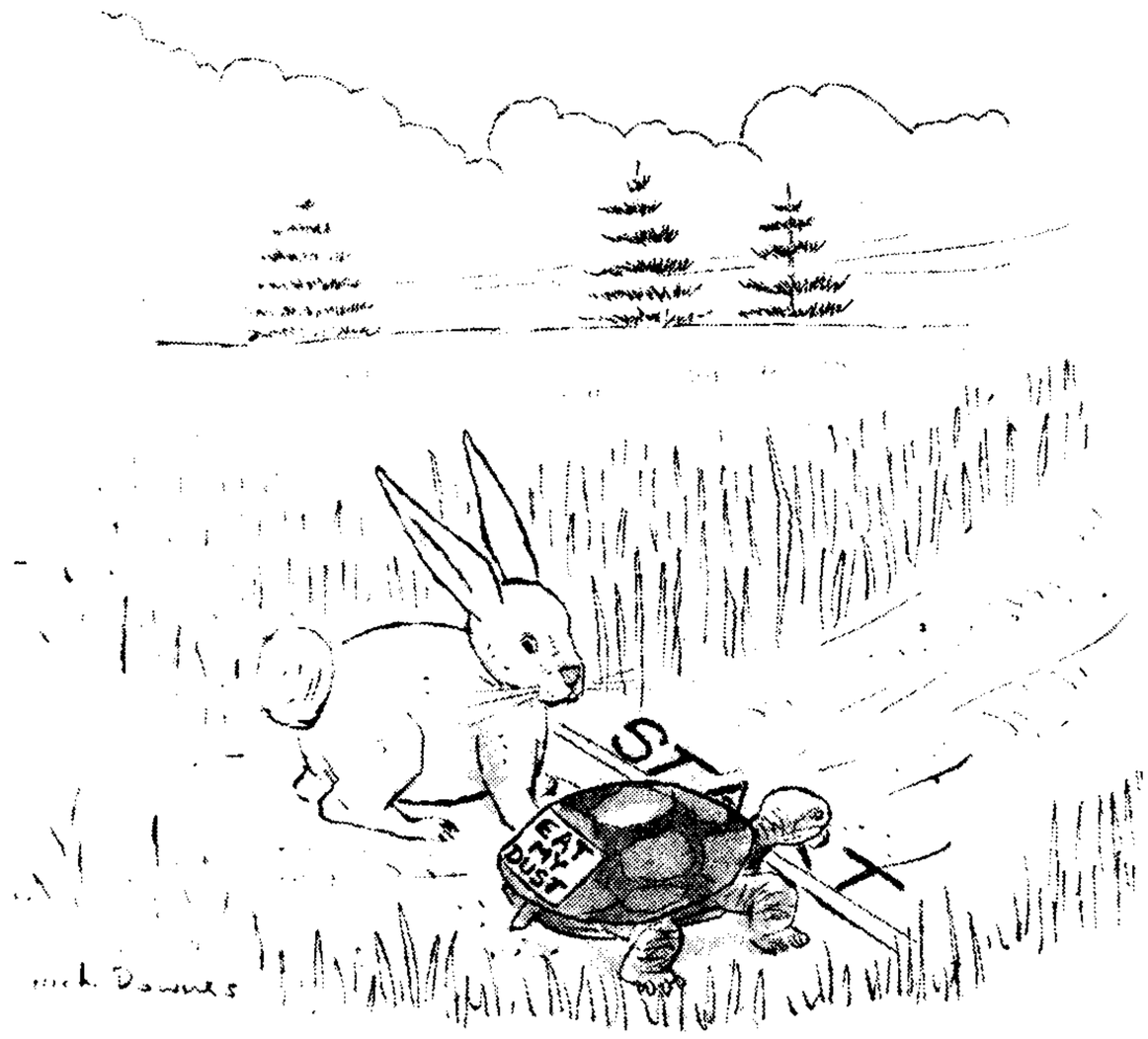
BRIAN REDHEAD: ... and there are unconfirmed reports of a very serious battle indeed raging somewhere that we cannot talk about for security reasons. We'll come back to that as soon as we know even less about it than we do now. General, I wonder if we could pick up on what we were saying four hours ago, about what is going to happen when the war is over.

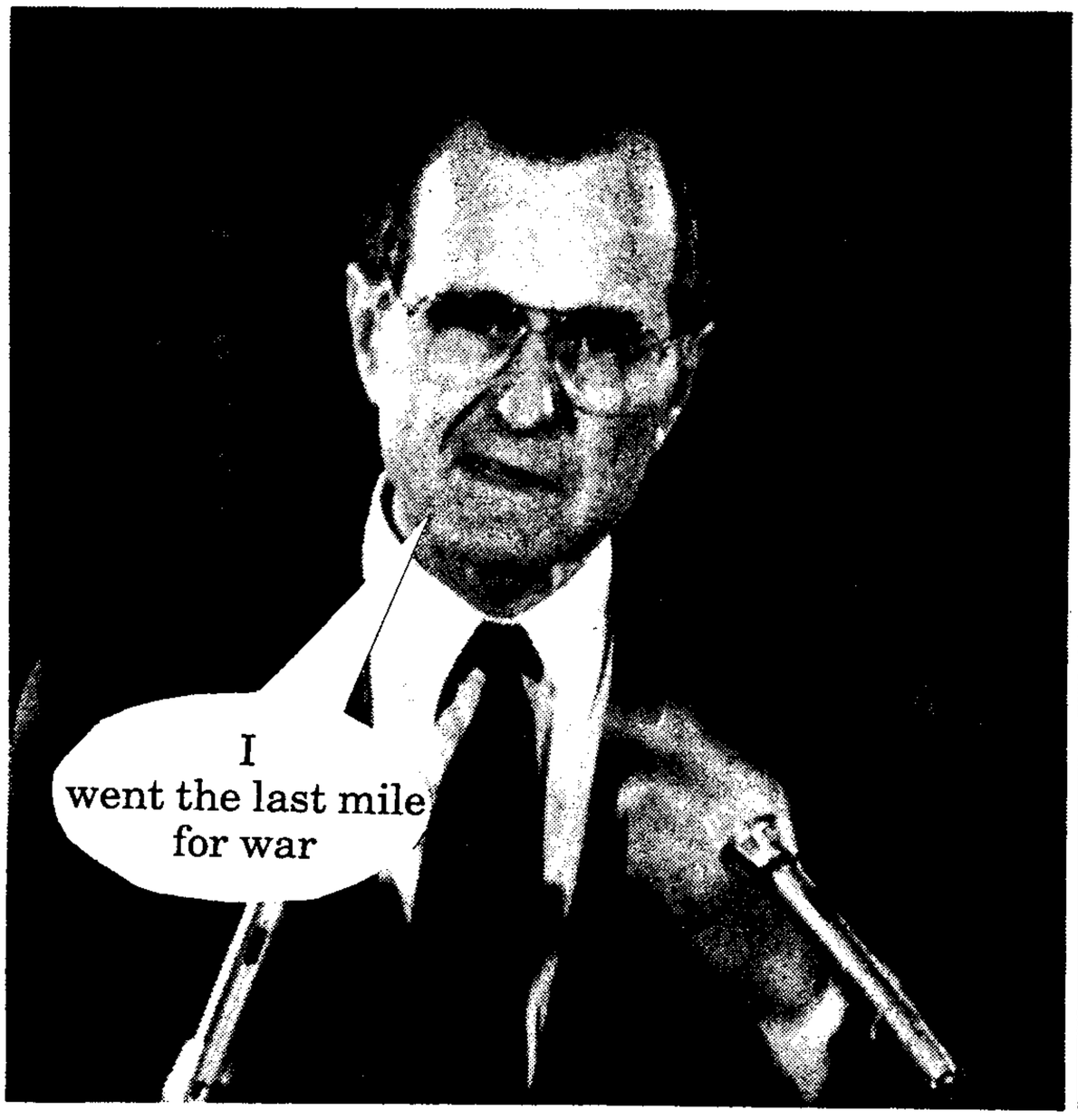
GENERAL SIR ANTHONY FARRER-GUSSETT: Yes, well, that is the main question now. There's no doubt that we've got a whole new range of problems to cope with here. What I'm thinking of in particular is what is going to happen to all these hundreds of generals, air vice-marshals and other experts who are going to have to pick up the pieces of their lives. I mean, what is perhaps difficult for the non-military mind to grasp is what it is like when, for nearly six weeks, you've been there in the front line in one studio after another, facing a continual round-the-clock barrage of questions about things you know nothing about. You never know when the next topic is going to land on you — and then suddenly, it's all over. A deathly silence. Nothing but the clock ticking in your study as you sit there all alone doing the *Telegraph* crossword and wondering when the lady wife is going to come in to say that lunch is ready. War is a grisly business — but nothing like as gruelling as peace.

REDHEAD: I would like to bring in a leading expert on depression here, Dr Anthony O'Looneigh. Doctor, you've made a special study of what you call the Post-Conflict Withdrawal Trauma Syndrome. Would you say that some of the most serious casualties of a modern war are those experts who find that after a period of intense nervous excitement and being at the centre of world events they cannot readjust to normal post-war life without extensive counselling therapy by highly-trained experts? And would you further say, in the light of your studies, that in extreme cases it may be necessary to administer large amounts of scotch whisky ...

O'LOONEAIGH: Can I come in here?

REDHEAD: No, you may not, I do the talking on this show.





Turds' Gulf single shocks no one at all

by Our Rock Correspondent
Adrian "Chuck" Berry

THE ROCK world showed no signs of interest at all when the Turds, a popular singing group some quarter of a century ago, released a new single condemning the war in the Gulf.

At a press conference, attended by no less than three representatives of the musical press, Mr Spigismond Topes, the Turds' lead singer, explained why the group had decided to make "a musical statement" about the Middle East conflict.

Stoned

"The Turds have always been rebels," he said. "That is why it is very important for us to make clear our position to the record-buying public — i.e. that we are not just a clapped-out bunch of geriatric millionaires but are a right-on group, tuned in to what's going down on the streets, e.g. that people are saying that we are totally washed-up and they don't want to buy any more albums of our old stuff, er, so this is a new single, with a completely new sound, with a new message for the kids of the Eighties. I've got the words written here on the back of my *FT*:

Fade Away (We Won't)

Yeah, don't the war make you sick?
Anyone who's in favour of it must be thick.
And what about the oil slick?
Bush is just a Fascist dickhead.

I can't get no satisfaction.
I can't get no, I can't get no,
I can't get no... Er, you know how it goes... Then Keith does a bit here, or is it Bill? Anyway, it's great and with any luck it'll be banned and get to Number One in a couple of minutes..."

BBC to ban new Turds shocker

Sir Spiggy Jagger was "over the moon" last night at the news that BBC disc-jockey Kevin Paunch, 53, has banned any further playings of the Turds' new anti-war single on his popular Radio Norfolk show, "Paunch's Pop-Pickin' Party From 2-3 a.m. For Norfolk Night Owls".

"I refuse point blank to allow this material to be given the oxygen of publicity on my programme," said Paunch. "I have thought long and hard about this song, and frankly it is so pathetic that I cannot in all conscience put it on the turntable."

Mick Jagger is 89.

It's the Jaci Stacey column

She's new!

She's Welsh!

She's dirty!

MEN'S BUMS? Don't-chaluv'em?! They're big! They're bouncy! They're beautiful!

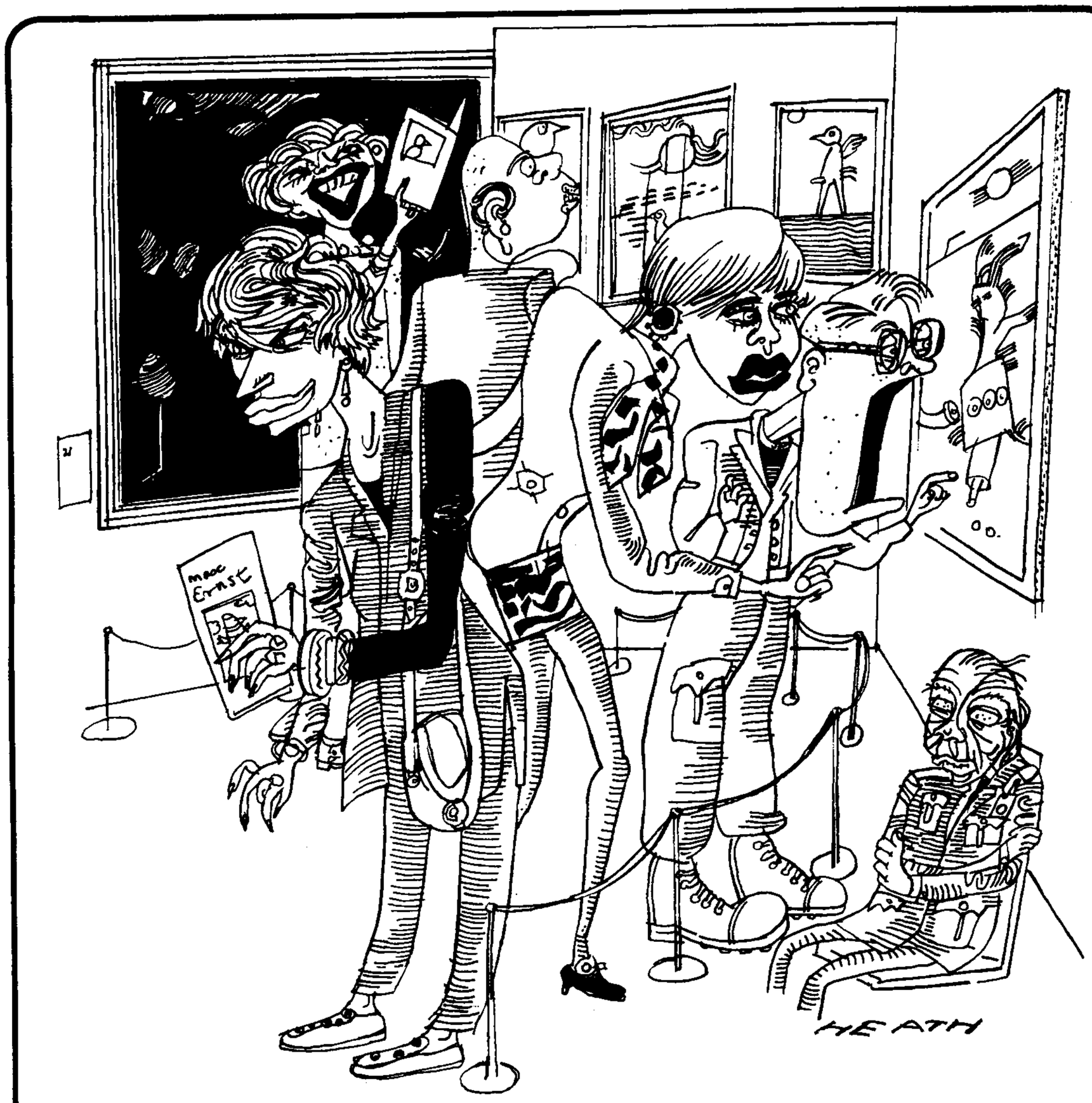
Cor!! When I see a fella's bum a-wigglin' and a-squigglin' I sure get the hots mister and it kinda drives me wild!!

(You're fired. Ed)

Error

The Observer wishes to apologise for a typesetting error in our Tots and Toddlers advertising feature last week which led to Binswood Nursery School being described as serving 'children casserole' instead of chicken casserole.

Leamington Spa Observer



Great Bores Of Today.

"...it's only snobbery just because he looks like a punk rocker and does ads on the telly people put him down I think he's a brilliant violinist I've got all his CDs have you heard the *Four Seasons*? it's amazing and if young people are introduced to real music through him then so much the better I think he's a breath of fresh air in the classical scene and he's blown away the cobwebs of the stuffy black-tie establishment what people can't stand is that he can play Vivaldi and Bruch and er... you know... Vivaldi yet he can appear on *Top of the Pops* and get the kids behind him and that's so important otherwise where's the next generation of classical music lovers? I gather he's doing another one this year Brahms I think or is it Vivaldi...?"

LOOK AT THIS, ANDY... A SPECIAL CAKE BAKED FOR ME BY THE LADY IN MY LIFE.
WOW.
I TOLD HER THAT BEING BEHIND BARS WAS DRIVING ME MAD SO SHE AGREED TO SMUGGLE IN SOMETHING TO HELP ME ESCAPE.
YEAH.
YEAH. AS SOON AS I GET MY HANDS ON WHAT'S CONCEALED IN HERE I'LL BE AWAY MATE.
A FILE? WHERE'S ALL THE MIND-EXPANDING SUBSTANCES?
I THINK I MUST BE HALLUCINATING.

SAVE THE GUARDIAN ONE

Mass Rally Organised By The Committee For The Reinstatement Of Ms Jill Tweedie To Her Rightful Place, i.e. The *Guardian* Women's Page

The women of Britain are totally horrified at the brutal and callous sacking of our sister Jill Tweedie by the Editor of the fascist *Guardian* newspaper, a man and a fully paid-up member of the phallocentric establishment.

This assault is a crime against women everywhere. Ms Tweedie has been in the forefront of the women's struggle for over 70 years, and no one can forget her seminal article of 1967, "MEN, DON'T YOU HATE THEM?".

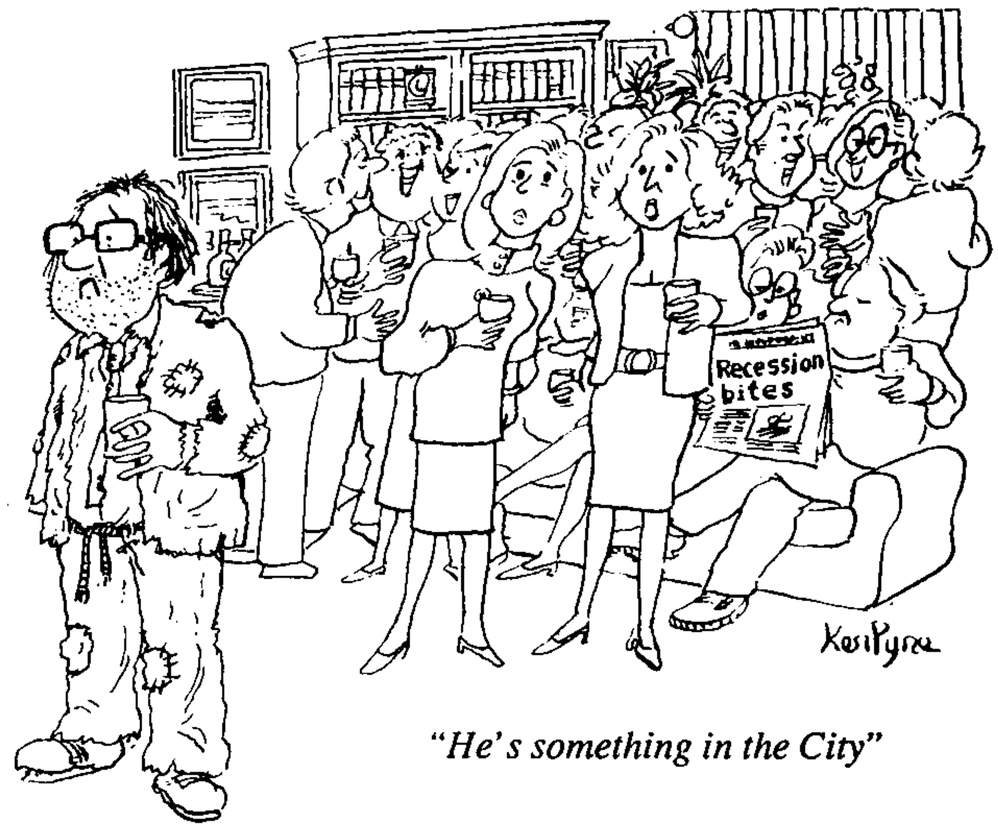
What we are demanding:

- **an immediate ceasefire in the Gulf**
- **the immediate castration of all men on the *Guardian* staff**
- **a suitable woman to be appointed editor of the *Guardian* immediately, i.e. Ms Jill Tweedie**

Speakers:

Ms Jill Tweedie, J. Tweedie, and a former *Guardian* woman's writer (name to be announced).

Come to Flat D, 137 Tufnell Park Road, Hampstead and ring bell marked "Tweedie, J".



"He's something in the City"

The *Guardian* is proud to reprint the column about the bias of the British press that helped it win the coveted What The Papers Say award for Nwespapre of Teh Yare.

Propaganda in British Newspapers

We have...
The American War Machine

They have...
Teenage Conscripts

We have...
Pentagon Hawks

They have...
Senior Revolutionary Commanders

Our missiles cause...
Horrific civilian casualties

Their missiles cause...
Embarrassment to the Coalition

Our support for Israel is...
Hypocritical

Their attacks on Israel are...
Inevitable

George Bush is...
Warmongering
Macho
Imperialist

Saddam Hussein is...
Being painted into a corner
Not being allowed to save face
Clearly willing to withdraw

We ignore UN resolutions...
Cynically

They ignore UN resolutions...
In a spirit of compromise

We have...
Censorship
Disinformation

They have...
Reporting restrictions
Official sources

We at the Guardian are...
Insufferably smug and self-righteous

Everyone else is...
Stupid and evil

(That's enough Grauniad — Ed.)

"Well, I'm glad you asked me that..."

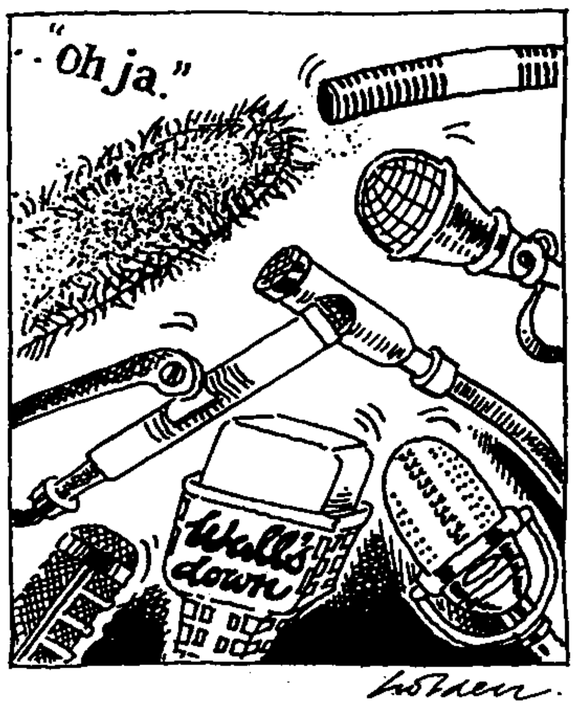
The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

Today I had to go to Germany to meet the German Prime Minister who is called Mr Kohl. Mr Hurd told me that I should call him Herr, but I think it is a bit familiar to call him by his first name when I hardly know him.

When I got on the aeroplane I noticed that there were hundreds of people on it. Everyone's been saying that the airlines are having a rotten time because of the recession. What rubbish! My plane was remarkably full. It was a block booking of journalists who were all going to Germany like me. What a coincidence!

When I arrived I was taken in a car to see Mr Kohl, who lives in a big castle. I realised at once that we had a lot in common because his suit was



exactly the same colour as mine, which broke the ice nicely.

After that we had to go into a big room. I saw all the people I had met on the plane coming over. It's a small world!

Tuesday

Today we had another meeting of the War Cabinet. The new steel shutters over the windows made the room a bit dark, but it meant we could see the television very well, to find out what we were doing in the Gulf. Apparently Mr Gorbachev is trying to spoil everything by having a peace proposal, but then Mr Bush rang up and left a message with my secretary to say that we weren't to take any notice of it, and I needn't even bother to read it. What a relief. Norma told us all rather a long story about something that had happened at Andrew Lloyd-Webber's wedding, which he had been to. It was all about him making "a proposal to some piece". I didn't really get the point, but everyone else laughed.

Wednesday

When I arrived at my desk this morning, Mr Heseltine was sitting behind it.

"Ah, John," he said, when I came in. "I've had a brilliant idea to help us win the next election."

He opened his briefcase and took out an envelope, on the back of which he had scribbled some notes.

"What is going to lose us the next election?" he said in a very important voice. "I'll tell you. The poll tax." "I know that perfectly well," I told him. "That's why I've put someone in charge of it."

Mr Heseltine then explained his new scheme for abolishing the poll tax and replacing it with a new tax based on how much people's houses are worth. "That means that the rich people will pay more than the poor people." "Gosh," I said, "that's absolutely brilliant, Michael. What shall we call it?"

"I've even though of that," he said. "It is called the rates."

Thursday

Everyone is complaining that they can't get into work because of the IRA bombs. Only a few weeks ago they were complaining that they didn't have any work to go to. Honestly, you can't please some people whatever you do!

The BBC rang up wanting to know what my favourite records were. My friend Chris, who was in the room, suggested "record unemployment, record inflation, record bankruptcies". It is typical of Chris to be so flippant over what is a serious matter — i.e. what my favourite records are. I thought for a considerable period of time and said: " 'Oh Boy' by Buddy Holly and the Cricket, which is incidentally my favourite game."

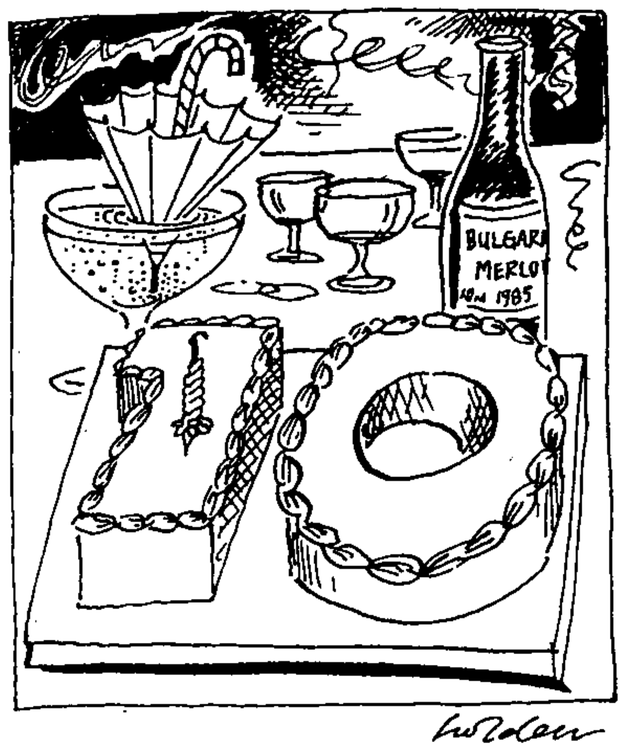
Friday

This afternoon I had to go to the House of Commons for Question Time. I'm really beginning to get quite good at answering the questions. The first one today was from Mr Kinnock, who asked: "Would the Prime Minister not agree that the Government's policy on the Gulf is absolutely right?" He was obviously trying to catch me out by being much shorter than usual, and not giving me time to think. But I was more than a match for him. "Oh, yes," I said, and sat down.

Then Mr Ashdown asked his question. He has been in the army so you have to listen carefully. "Will the Prime Minister accept our assurances that we are right behind him in his determination to win this war?" Guess what I replied? "I refer you to the answer I made earlier to the Leader of the Opposition." That saw him off!

Saturday

Today I am having a party at Number Ten Downing Street, which is where I live. They said I could invite anyone I liked, so long as it included the Bulgarian prime minister. My friend Chris said I would easily recognise him because he would be the one wearing a grey suit and carrying a poisoned



umbrella. I think he must have been joking again, because everyone was wearing a grey suit!

But the star guest was a girl called Kate Bush. I spent a considerable period of time talking to her in the hopes that she might pass on some of the things that her father was planning to do in the Gulf war, but she pretended to know nothing about it. They are very well trained, these Americans.

Sunday

A momentous day. Mr Bush rang me up on the grey phone next to the bed. He said: "John Boy, we're kicking Iraqi ass." Obviously this is a secret code, which I spent some considerable period of time trying to work out. However, Mr Bush is no fool. The code does not feature in my 1965 *Look and Learn Secret Cypher Manual*. I go back to sleep and dream I am Smiley.

Monday

Amazing news. The ground war has started. I tell the War Cabinet that this is my own decision and that Mr Bush agreed with my proposals "to kick Iraqi ass". Mr Waldegrave, who I have to admit I do not hit it off with, says: "Well done, Prime Minister. I always said you could do this job in your sleep." If, peradventure, there is a Cabinet reshuffle, he may be spending a considerable time with his family.

We then turned on the television to watch what Mr Hurd had told us was going to be an important morale-boosting broadcast from the one woman who unites the nation in times of crisis. Imagine my surprise when the Queen came on. I wish the BBC would stop messing about with the programme.

A Decadent Empire?

THERE IS profound and growing unease among the British people about the role of Britain's richest and most powerful couple. At the centre of our national life, they exercise an enormous influence over our nation.

And it is only right that we should ask — what exactly have Andy and Murdie been doing during this country's gravest hour since 1940? Whilst our boys have been risking their lives daily in the parched deserts of Arabia, what has been the contribution of these two gilded children of privilege?

I will tell you what. At the very moment when our brave Tornado pilots have been flying through blizzards of Triple A, Andy has been seen in swanky West End nightspots, stuffing his face with rich food at somebody else's expense and joking into the small hours with his cronies. As for his other half, Murdie, this loud-mouthed, overweight Australian has scandalised all right-thinking people by persisting in the outrageous self-indulgence of keeping Sky Television going, at a time when the nation's mind has been on graver matters.

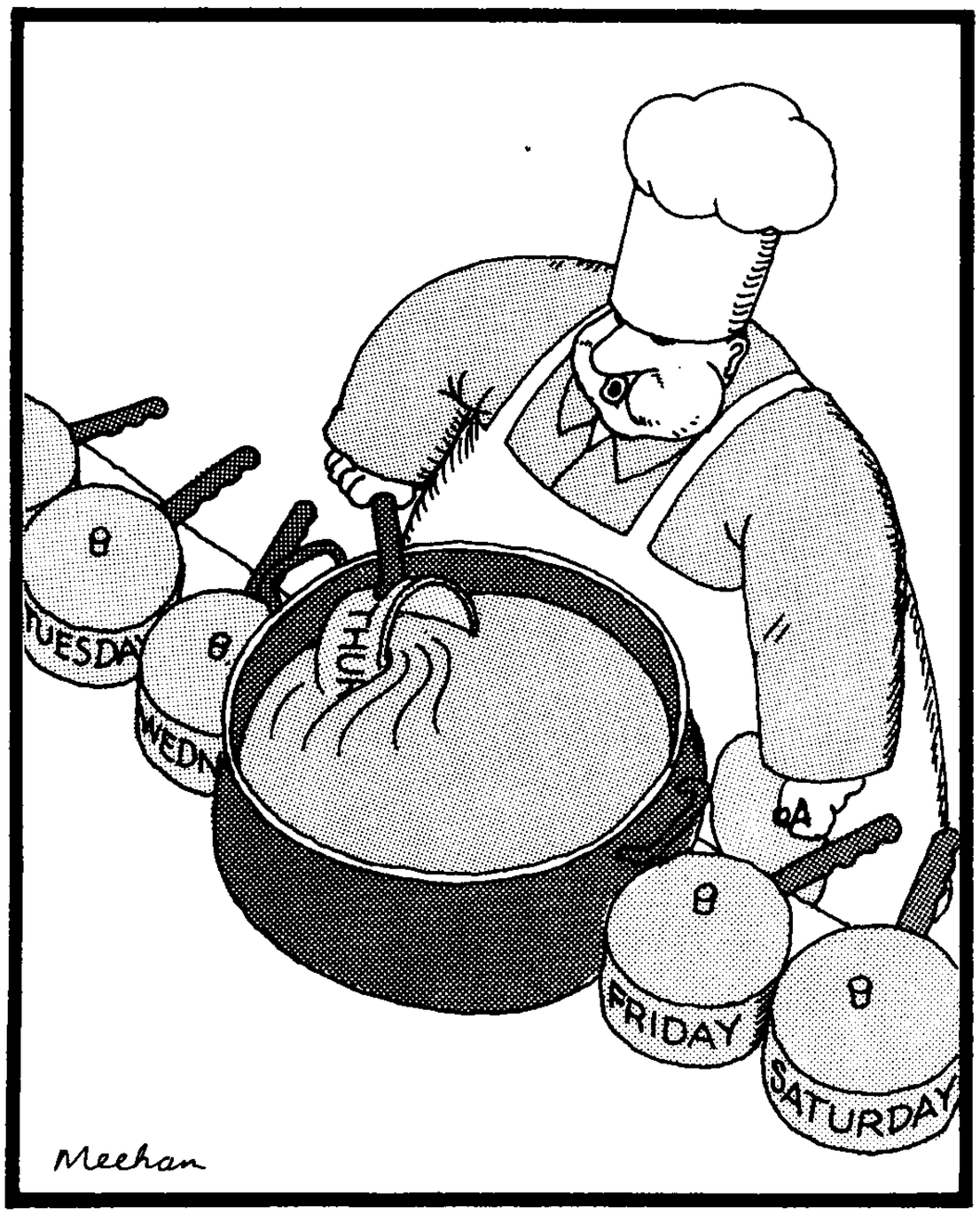
Are we not right to feel affronted at the spectacle of yet another Andy and Murdie skiing article in the *Sunday Times* at a time when the Royal Navy is engaged in hazardous mine-sweeping activities in the northern Gulf? Don't these trivial-minded people know there is a war on?

But all these offences against taste and decency pale into insignificance when compared to the outrage of last weekend. First we were treated to the spectacle of Murdie's *News of the World* lavishing a fortune on the sorry tale of Miss Sally Ann Lasson and her fling with Viscount Althorp. Then Murdie's other pet paper, the *Sun*, printed some very old photographs of Lord Linley at the opening of a nightclub. Finally, Andy wrote a staggeringly pompous and self-righteous editorial asking what had all this to do with the war?

How disgusting can you get? Do neither of these well-heeled lazy layabouts have nothing better to do at a time of national crisis than to dream up some fatuous crusade against Britain's long-suffering royals in a desperate bid to whip up interest in their vulgar publications? We say it is high time that Andy and Murdie abdicated, and that the entire overblown and outmoded apparatus of the News International empire was thrown onto the rubbish dump of history.

● *Since this editorial appeared, Andy has desperately stepped up his Gulf commitments, including making a trip to the front line and writing a piss-poor Boy's Own piece in Murdie's Sunday Times,* **reports Brian MacBrownnose.** *We are not fooled.*

Andy and Murdie: Royal-obsessed funsters make whoopee as Kuwait burns.



Soup of the day

Yes, It's Inspector Morse Rhyming Slang!

Wednesday night	**Viewer's delight**
Two-hour slot	**Impenetrable plot**
Another case	**Very slow pace**
News at Ten after	**Should get a BAFTA**
TV dinner	**Franchise winner**
Morse, Inspector	**Money for Colin Dexter**
John Thaw	**He gets even more**
Kevin Whately	**Made quite a bit lately**
Sergeant Lewis	**Loved by reviewers**
Oxford location	**Pleasant vacation**
Murder and robbery	**Plenty of snobbery**
Opera buff	**That's enough** *(Ed)*

THAT BR SNOW IN FULL

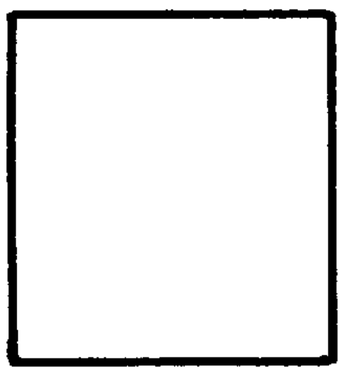
— telltale pictures released

by Our Rail Staff **Liverpool Street-Porter**

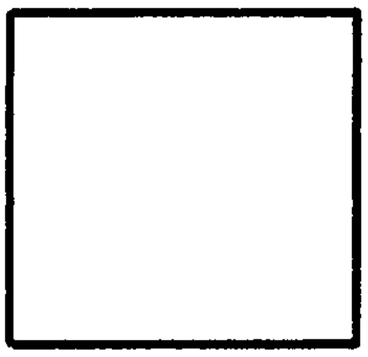
BRITISH RAIL today released pictures showing the two types of British snow, one of which resulted in wide-scale disruption during the recent "Siberian snap".

A BR spokesman said that research would be carried out at the BR Institute of Snowology to try and find a way to convert the dangerous new killer snow into the old-fashioned commuter-friendly nonexistent snow.

Thomas The Tank Engine has been cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.



This is the type of snow that they were expecting — train-friendly, invisible, and totally dry.



This is Killer Snow — white, damp and fallen from the sky.

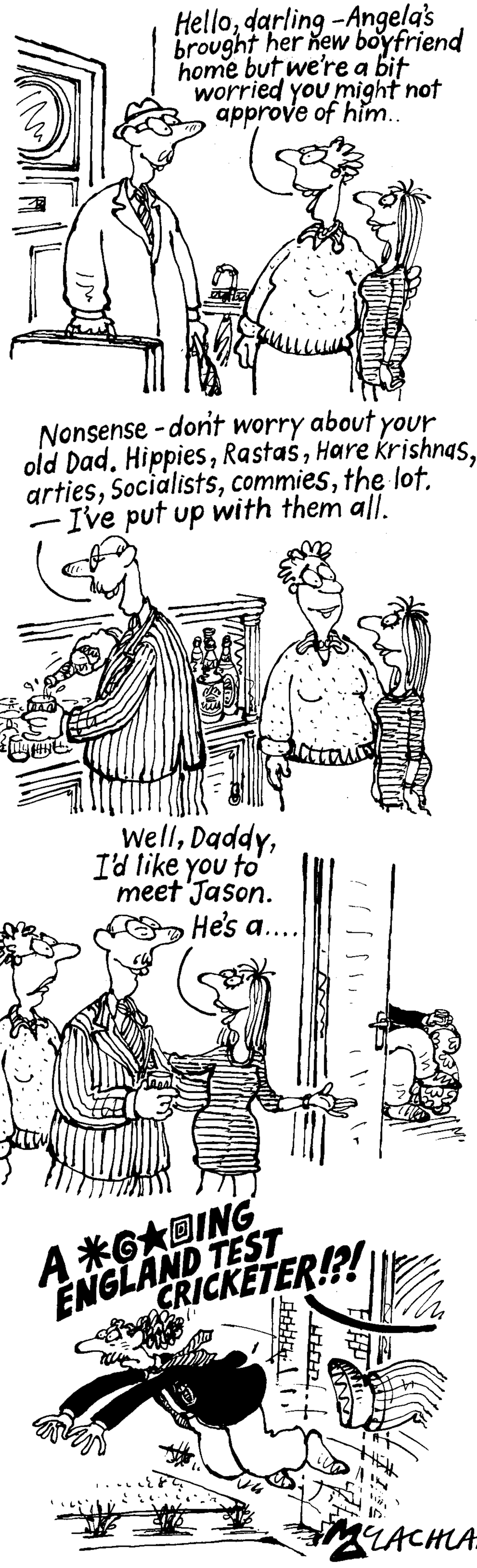
Lines Written On The Occasion Of The Historic Reconciliation Between The *Daily Telegraph* And The Greatest Cartoonist Of The Age, Sir Nicholas Garland

by **Mr William McGonagall**

'Twas in the year Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-One,
Just four weeks after the Gulf War had begun,
That GARLAND returned to the Daily Telegraph
In order to provide its readers with a meaningful laugh.

Squires and peasants throughout the land
Snatched for their Telegraph with eager hand.
But his first effort, on whether the Soviet peace offer was lawful,
Was judged by one and all to be bloody awful.

(That's enough McGonagall — Ed.)


Hello, darling - Angela's brought her new boyfriend home but we're a bit worried you might not approve of him..
Nonsense - don't worry about your old Dad. Hippies, Rastas, Hare Krishnas, arties, Socialists, commies, the lot. — I've put up with them all.
Well, Daddy, I'd like you to meet Jason. He's a....
A *G*ING ENGLAND TEST CRICKETER!?!
McLACHLAN

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: The Royal Family are determined to do their bit during the war.

Now read on...

CHARLES awoke unusually early for him. His ornate VanderValk carriage clock, a gift from Queen Sultana of the Hague, announced that it was eleven o'clock by the emergence of two exquisitely carved Nubian slave boys to strike one another with golden hammers.

Charles had found it difficult to sleep the previous night due to a strange thumping sound from the drawing room that had persistently disrupted the normal quiet of the Gloucestershire countryside. It was like the savage beating of the tom-toms of the Sesame tribe, so eloquently described in *Travels In My Imagination* by his old fraud and mentor *(shurely 'friend'? Ed)* Sir Laurens van der Post. As he got out of bed and pulled back the heavy velvet drapes, one phrase reverberated in his mind:

"It's when the drums stop beating you've got to worry."

How true that was, and as true at Highgrove as in the dusty bush of the Krishnahari... Slipping into his Proctor and Gamble cavalry twill dressing gown, he wandered bleary-eyed down to the drawing room.

The scene that greeted his eyes was both familiar and shocking. Asleep on the settee sprawled the tousled figure of Rupert Ricketson-Smythe, a pair of black lace tights incongruously draped around his neck. On the floor beside him was a half-empty bottle of Sally Ann Lasson Tatler champagne and there were cigarette ends piling up in almost every conceivable container — including the priceless Victorian Worsthorne embonpoint.

The acrid smell of stale tobacco and flat champagne assaulted his nostrils like a slap in the face. Now, as his eyes accustomed themselves to the dim half-light, he could discern other forms. The Duchess Fergiana was snoring heavily by the fire, still wearing a Gerard Depardieu black and white PVC one-piece ballgown which, Charles could not help thinking, made her look rather like a beached whale he had once seen on the shores of Loch Wogan when hunting with the Duke, his father, for red squirrels.

And there was his cousin, the young furniture designer, what was his name?, underneath the escritoire with Georgie Cavendish surrounded by cans of the fashionable "in" drink, Mandela South African Township Lager ("It does your head in, man").

Charles had seen enough. There was only one word for it. And he said it out loud:

"Appalling!"

Ricketson-Smythe stirred on the settee and addressed Charles in his familiar Etonian drawl.

"God! What a thrash! My head feels like the towelheads have dropped a Scud on it! Gawd!"

Charles felt that this remark was in rather poor taste and said so: "There is actually you know a sort of war on, Rupert."

At these words Diana's voice rang out behind him.

"Don't be so pompous, Chazza."

Charles turned to his wife, radiant in the designer uniform of a Colonel of the 9th Sloane Rangers complete with fetching beret, riding breeches and silver-topped swingle-stick.

"Actually Chazza this was a party to raise money for the boys in the Gulf. Fergie did a sponsored dance all night and pulled in a stack while you were sleeping. Some of us are doing our bit. Can't say I've seen *you* up to much."

Charles reddened.

"What d'you mean? I'm er..."

Diana turned on her exquisitely formed heel.

"While you're trying to think up something I've got to go and launch a new C-Class Mine-Hunter, HMS Yorkie. So if you'll excuse me..."

Charles was furious.

"I will not be spoken to like that in my own home. I'm the heir to the throne, actually..."

But his wife had gone. Georgie Cavendish lit up a Rabbi Bleu unfiltered cigarette and blew a stream of sweet-smelling smoke through her smeared lips.

"Another row, Chucky?"

Linley chimed in, climbing unsteadily to his feet.

"Story of your life, Chazzbo. Yawno..."

Ricketson-Smythe laughed.

"You can't get any sleep round here in the mornings. They're always at it." There was laughter round the room. "I'm never going to get married..."

" 'I'm never going to get married,' said the suave Duc de Balon, but he did. And they all lived happily ever after in his big castle."

DAME Barbara Cartland closed her latest novel, *Love Conquers All*, the entire contents of which she had just read to a bewildered Charles. She had cornered him in the

Sacher-Masoch corridor of Buckingham Palace after her investiture as Dame Commander of the Most Noble Order of the Commode.

"Wasn't it divine?"

"The book? Yes, frightfully good. Awfully... er... thingie — not appalling, the other one..."

"Not my *book*, dear," corrected the ancient beldame, "though it is kind of

you to say so. I meant our little ceremony."

Charles nodded.

"Oh, I see. It all went very well. Even your home video crew were awfully well behaved."

"Weren't they sweet?" The painted octogenarian purred as she adjusted her pink flamingo feather boa. The light reflected from her massive drop diamond earrings in the shape of dachshunds.

"You know I'm so glad we managed to have this little tête-a-tête."

"Yes. Fellow authors sort of thing," Charles muttered encouragingly.

"I know, my dear, isn't it wonderful?" She clutched him with a beringed talon whilst her other hand emptied a silver phial of Royal Jelly into her mouth.

"People often say," she continued, "my novels are pure romantic tosh and that there are no such things as a handsome Prince and a beautiful Princess living a life of bliss. But we know differently, don't we?"

Charles withdrew his hand, but the voice of the millionaire authoress flowed on. "It's so wonderful. So marvellous. You and Diana are the living proof that Romance in this modern day is not dead. Yours is the perfect marriage."

For a moment Charles fell under the spell of the elderly storyteller who had so beguiled the reading masses with her gilded fiction. Fiction... Fiction... Fiction...

(To be continued)

The Voice of Broadmoor

Why oh why are these traitors still alive?

Asks PAUL JOHNSON, Britain's No. 1 Loony

THERE is one offence on the statute book of England which still carries the punishment of hanging by the neck until dead.

And that is the ultimate crime of working for the BBC.

In older and better days, it was called simply "treason".

But in today's mealy-mouthed, Thatcherless world of fudge and mudge, they call it *Newsnight*.

Paxman Vobiscum

Every night Britain's policemen are failing in their duty to arrest the quislings of our screens such as Jeremy Paxman and David Dimbleby as they spew forth their unending flow of poisonous Iraqi propaganda.

Only three weeks ago I saw with my own eyes film showing a street in Baghdad with every single building still intact.

In fact, as I was informed by a very senior Israeli source, whom I happened to hear being interviewed on the radio, every building in Baghdad has long since been levelled to the ground by the gallant aircrews of our British B52s.

Try telling that to the Wood Lane traitors, as they swill champagne at our expense.

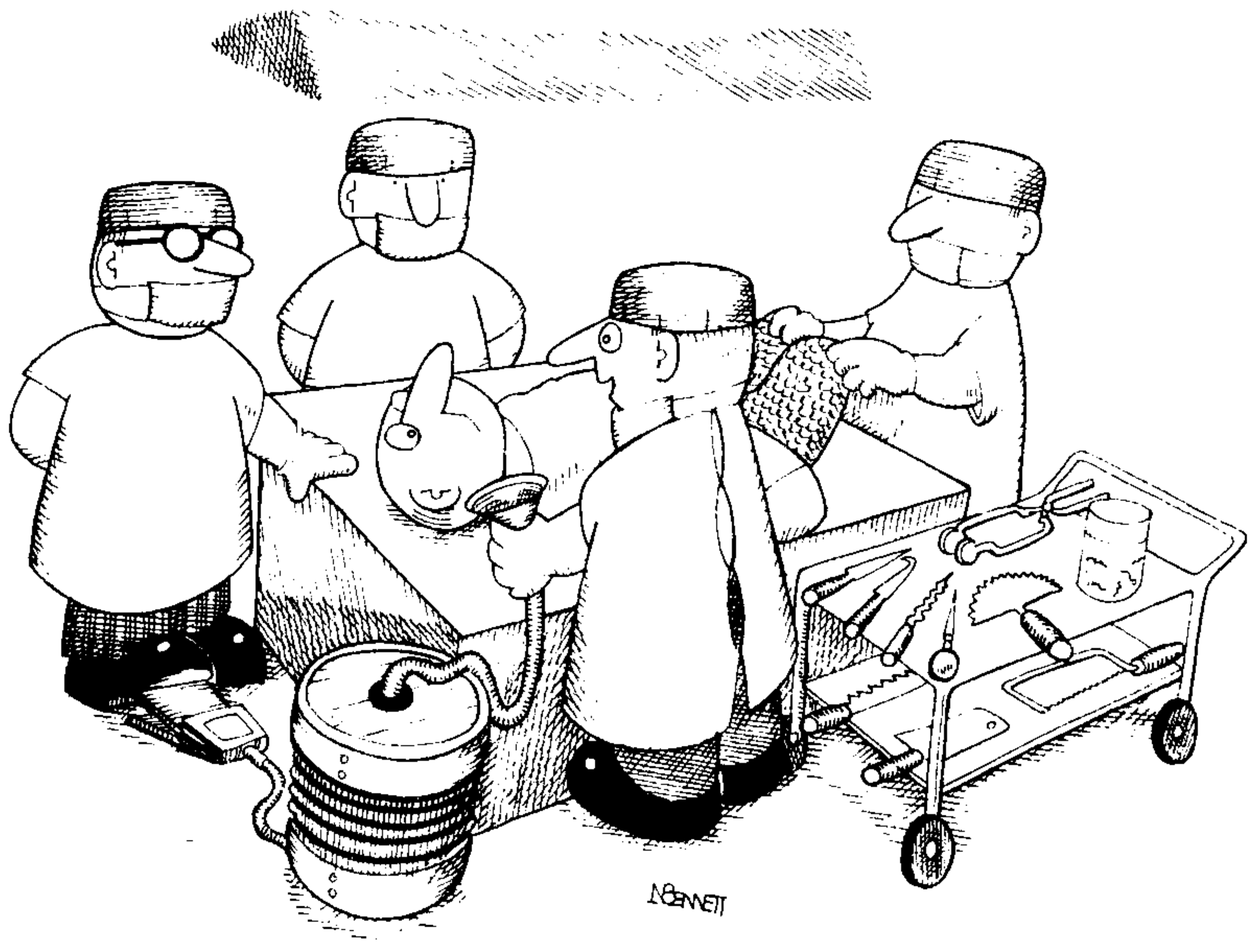
Their only response no doubt will be to give Mr Jeremy Bowen a few more hours of prime-time television to peddle more of the lies of Saddam Hussein.

Every right-thinking person in Britain must now agree that it is time for one of those aptly-named Patriot missiles to be trained on the Iraqi control and communications centre known as the BBC.

Of course millions will die — but that is the price you have to pay for freedom.

Exterminate, exterminate, exterminate... Is this enough?

Chief Dalek



"We're the London Consort of Surgeons, and we perform authentic operations using period instruments"

The Lynn Babar Interview

HELLO DALAI!

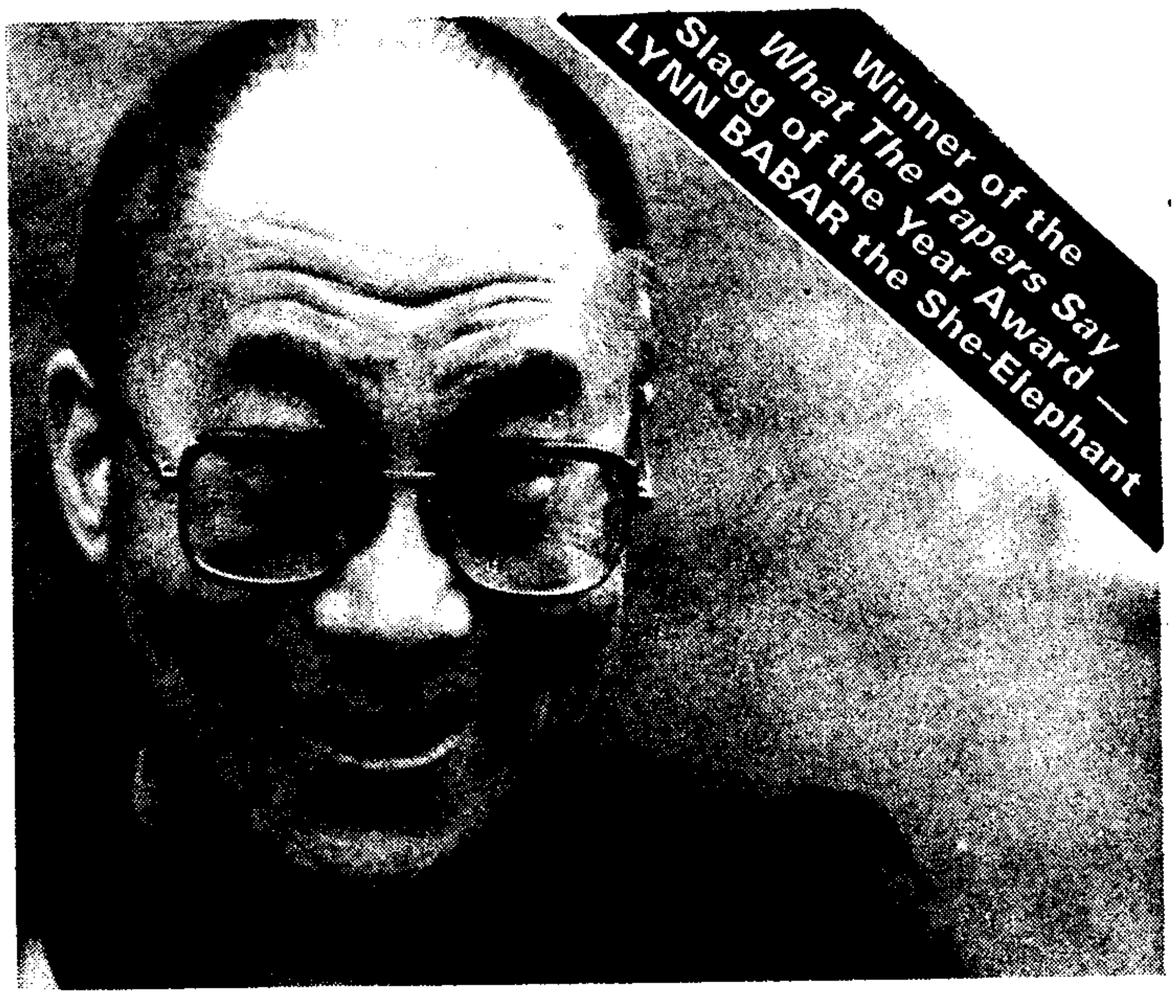
He looks like a saintly mystic, but is he a raving sex-fiend?

"HOW OFTEN do you get your leg over?" I ask the bespectacled self-possessed spiritual leader of Tibet's seven million Muslims. The Dalai Lama gives an enigmatic smile and smoothes his orange robe with a gesture of sanctity. Or is it shiftiness?

"Come on, Dalai, tell us about the women in your life. It can't all be sitting around in a monastery contemplating your navel."

Once again the so-called Holy Man will only give a wry smile. Friends had told me that he was likely to be reticent, especially on the subject of sex.

"Are you a poof, then?" It is not an unreasonable question. A lot of monks are that way inclined, and there is no reason to believe that the Dalai Lama is not in fact some sort of robe-lifter, as other friends have indicated.



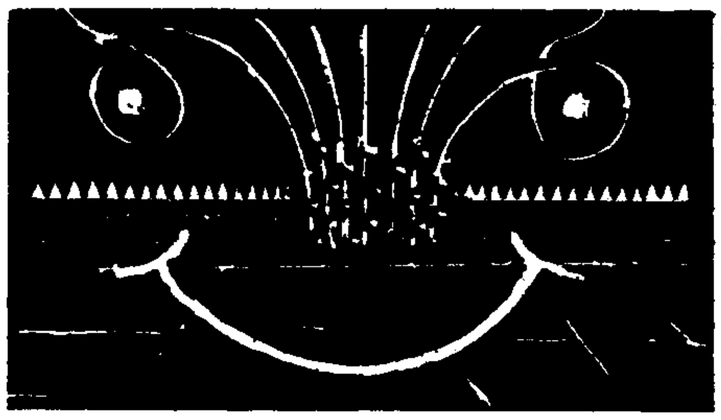
There are few clues to be garnered from the room in which he holds court. Two chairs (one for his boyfriend?) and a photograph of a monastery. The tea he offers is hot and sweet.

"Is that how you like your women, then?" I ask. "Like your tea?"

The dark side of the supposed Living God is immediately in evidence. He offers me more tea and smiles in a sinister fashion. What a creep, I think *(cont. p.94)*

INTRODUCING
PAX-MAN
®
BY DAY HE WAS MILD-MANNERED JEREMY FROM NOTTING HILL BUT BY NIGHT HE WAS FEARLESS, AGGRESSIVE, IN FACT, RATHER RUDE... PAXMAN.©
A CALL ON THE PAX-PHONE© REACHES JEREMY AT THE BACHELOR PAX-PAD©...
PAXMAN©! IT'S THE NEWSCHIEF HERE! THERE'S A CRISIS! WE NEED YOU FOR AN INTERVIEW.
NO, I'VE ALREADY DONE GQ, ESQUIRE, THE MAIL, RADIO TIMES, TIME OUT...
NO, WE NEED YOU TO INTERVIEW SOMEONE.
I'M ON MY WAY. YOU CAN COUNT ON ME TO BE WELL-INFORMED, WELL-GROOMED AND WELL-RUDE!
HE JUMPS INTO THE WAITING PAX-MOBILE© AND PERFORMS HIS LEGENDARY QUICK CHANGE FROM ARRAN SWEATER TO PASTEL-BLUE DESIGNER SUIT.
TAXI
LIMEGROVE AND STEP ON IT! I'VE GOT TWENTY MINUTES TO SAVE THE ENTIRE PROGRAMME!
BLOODY HELL SQUIRE, THOSE IRAQIS, I KNOW WHAT I'D DO... I HAD THAT CLIVE WOGAN IN THE BACK THE OTHER DAY.
STAND BACK EVERYONE, THIS IS A JOB FOR PAXMAN©!
THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE! WE'VE GOT THE EVIL IRAQI-AMBASSADORMAN ON!!
SWOON!!
MY HERO!!
AND SO THE DARK NEWSKNIGHT RETURNS...
GASP! HE'S USING THE PAX-TIE©!
...AND THE DEADLY X-CAMBRIDGE RAY©!
WHY?
HOW?
GQ
PAX-MAN'S INTERVIEW
TOWELHEAD!
HOLY WAR!
KERR-MOFF!
WITHIN MINUTES IT'S ALL OVER...
WE SURRENDER! WE GIVE IN PAXMAN©! JUST LAY OFF WITH YOUR FIRM-BUT-FAIR QUESTIONING AND YOUR MERCILESS GOOD LOOKS!
HOORAY FOR BRITAIN'S MOST ELIGIBLE BACHELOR!
HOW CAN WE EVER THANK YOU?!
NO NEED. IT'S ALL IN A NIGHT'S WORK. I'M JUST RIGHTING WRONGS, DEFENDING DEMOCRACY AND KEEPING EVERYONE AWAKE BEFORE THE LATE SHOW WITH THEIR THRILLING PIECE ON THE GERMAN ARCHITECT MANNFRED KLUGG...
HURRAH FOR TRUTH, FREEDOM AND GOOD BONE STRUCTURE!
PAXMAN© SAYS: REMEMBER KIDS, DON'T TRY PULLING ANY OF THESE STUNTS AT HOME. YOU MIGHT GET A CLIP ROUND THE EAR FOR BEING SO RUDE.

DIARY



CAROL AND MARK THATCHER

Coooeee! Carol T. here, daughter of Mummy! Me and Mark are penning the diary in this scuwillous journal this week — for our sins!! — but first offs we'd like to make it clear that we are doing it (actually we're not doing it as such, we're only bro and sis — joke!!) so as to waise the public pwofile of The Thatcher Foundation, a charity organisation set up to let everyone know about the super ideas that mummy has, such as the Community Charge and entering a wecession and not liking Europe. We aim to keep you tewiffically entertained, but we also aim to get you to dig jolly deep into those pockets for a weally super cause. Over to you, Marky!

Thanks, Carol. There's one popular misconception I'd like to clear up pretty damn pronto, okay? I am not — repeat, not — any kind of 'shady dealer' who is into 'making money' by 'riding on his mother's back'. Glad to have pulled the plug on that one.

I guess there will be those who want verification. Fair enough. Ask my mother, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, ex-Prime Minister of Great Britain and still a leading figure of world influence with contacts everywhere. Between these four walls, if you want to check that out with her in person, I could see my way clear to arranging a one-to-one meeting on very attractive terms, cash callers only please.

Absolutely super offer there, Mark! Carol here again, chums! My talents are in the way I can write about things so that readers who can read my writing can really understand what that writings mean and i suppose that's because my talents are in the way i write. Like Mark, I absolutely wefuse to 'cash in' on mummy's name, and I've got countless articles and books written under my own name to pwove it, i.e.'Diary of an Election — On The Road With Mummy by Carol Thatcher' (1983), 'Carol Thatcher On What It's Like Being Mummy's Daughter' (*Sunday Express*, '81, '84, '85, '87, '88-'91) and 'The Joy of Bobsleighing by Carol Thatcher' (*Daily Mail*, '89). The latter article started quite bwilliantly: "You don't have to be the Prime Minister's daughter to feel a gweat wush of adwenalin as you go jolly fast downhill in a Bobsleigh — but it helps!" Good stuff, eh, Mark?

Right, Carol. On a more serious note, commentators are claiming that this is a bad time for business but not from where I'm standing it bloody isn't. Just yesterday, I made a cool thirty g. without setting foot outside my luxury suite at Claridges, and that can't be bad, no way José.

Y'know, people sometimes ask me how exactly I earn my crust. Good question, and it deserves a good answer. Basically, I'm a people person. I bring people together and set up an attractive business environment in which they feel able to operate. I'll throw you a f'rinstance, if I may. Say you have a Scud missile on your hands — and I'm only saying *if*, please note — and you want to find a good home for it, you think: "Hmm, must contact my old friend Marky, he'll know the right bloke" and you give me a bell toot-sweet. Are you still with me? Marky here then flicks through his trusty contacts book and finds a marvellous old character, perhaps from the Middle East, who's simply crying out for such a first-class weapon. Bob's your proverbial, and in a jiffy hands are being shaken, contracts exchanged and a nice bit of vintage fizzy stuff on ice is wheeled in, courtesy Executive Room Service. Okay, so it's hard work, but I've never been frightened of that, and I've always wanted to be independent of my mother who is, incidentally, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, no less! Back to you, Carol.

Nice to have that cleared up for us, Mark. Sounds jolly interesting, I must say. As you all know, I'm a top journalist specialising in pwetty over-the-top assignments! You could say that I'm always "game for a laugh", to coin a phwase, and that's why Fleet Street's top editors are always on the blower to me. "Here's an assignment requiring someone to throw themselves off a cliff," they gasp. "I know, let's send top journalist Carol Thatcher!"

In my writing style I try hard to convey the breathless excitement of everything that happens to me in a manner that is very exciting and makes my excited weaders weally excited by the exciting things that happen to me and to feel it was almost as if they were doing these exciting things for themselves though they are obviously not, they are only reading about them.

Only last year, when I rang my chums at the *Daily Mail* and asked them if they had any super daredevil assignment for yours truly they asked me to go take a wunning jump, which weally got my adwenalin flowing, I kid you not! The very next day, I was climbing up the famous Swiss Matterhorn ready to throw myself off so as to be able to describe it for my devoted following of readers. Let's take a peek at how I captured that amazing moment:

"Taking a running jump is what one might call quite something or at least those were the thoughts that ran through my head as I plunged over the side of the Matterhorn. The feeling was literally indescribable, so much so that even now I can't describe it. 'That,' I told my super ambulanceman, 'was literally indescribable.' And if there's a single word that sums up the whole experience it was that one word. Literally indescribable."

Enough of my word-pictures for now. I'll say cheewio, and now it's back to you, twin bro!

And so to business. Why not treat yourself to the gift of a lifetime and take up exclusive membership of The Thatcher Foundation (all major credit cards accepted)? Membership will entitle you to full use of leisure facilities — solarium, members' pool, cocktail lounge, etcetera — at no extra cost to you or your family, and with the optional extra of a welcoming drink with yours truly plus wife and family (optional extra).

I myself will front the operation, and I aim for maximum comfort combined with minimum hassle. As far as the butler goes, we've found a real "Gentleman's Gentleman" in the form of Worsthorne, who's shaping into the perfect "treasure". Vis-a-vis banqueting facilities, we've recruited a splendid old character, Mr Paul Johnson, as Chief Barker. My mother will, of course, be on hand during the day to give you the benefit of her views on a variety of world issues, perhaps over a glass of our sensational Fruit Punch, specially created by barman Mr Rog "Screwtop" Scruton.

To take the kid gloves off for half a mo: we're after a cool 50g per institution, 5g per individual, straight up, no questions asked, and for an extra 25g we'll throw in a piece of state-of-the-art military hardware, can't say fairer than that. 'Nuff said, but do let's try to honour my mother by giving as much as you can to this smooth and stylish monument. Checks payable to "M. Thatcher". Ciao for now. Ciao!

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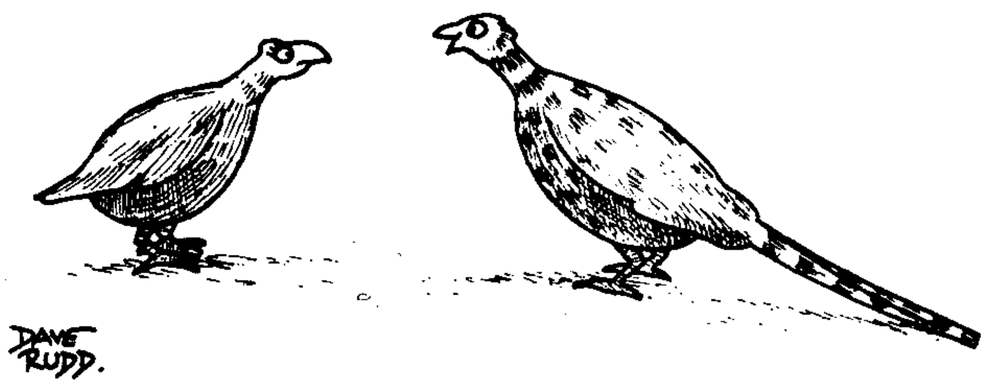

"Well, I'm game if you are..."

Literary Review

Not Carried away

Surrender the Pink
by Carrie Fisher
(Hutchinson, £12.99)

OF COURSE nobody minds film stars writing novels. Lots of them have and there isn't very much anyone seems to be able to do about it.

Dirk Bogarde has written some quite passable ones; Sylvester Stallone wrote one once, to the bewilderment of his publicists; even Kirk Douglas sat down at his word processor one morning, frowning at the desperate novelty of it all, and began to send some of those worrying accumulations of words — waddya know, *sentences?* — hopping around the mute, blameless screen.

No, nobody minds film stars writing novels. It's when film stars start writing novels and people go around pretending that they're art that the tired defenders of standards begin to get a little restive, a little anxious lest the joke become so prolonged that it ceases to be a joke at all.

Surrender the Pink, the second work by the star of, among others, *Star Wars* and *The Blues Brothers*, is a case in point. *It has to be a send up*, you feel as you negotiate all the crummy jokes and glum one-liners. And yet here amid the solemn ventilation of "normal relationships", the complaints of women anxious to be "fluent in sex", lurks a monstrous suspicion of something that appears to take itself very seriously indeed.

The seriousness has to be trailed after because, let's face it, nothing very much happens in *Surrender the Pink*. The story of a TV soap writer named Dinah Kaufman, it consists of not much more than a few self-conscious musings about — uh — sex, loosely strung together to form a plot in which Dinah meets up with her ex-husband Rudy, follows him on vacation to investigate his relationship with her replacement, has an inconclusive set-to with someone called Roy ("Captain Dream Thug") and ends up snapping the bed springs with a husky juvenile named Josh who in the TV series plays the actor "made in Rudy's image".

This being Hollywood, or at any rate one of its lower ledges, all the men have *problems*, notably legions of girlfriends who are upset about their ex-wives, while each of the women operates as an emotional sponge, or perhaps a better marine analogy would be a cuttlefish, spraying out endless jets of inky selfishness.

The vehicle for all this emotional megalomania, the absolute refusal of anyone to doubt the invincibility of their ego, is a kind of terminal irony. The people here don't have conversations, they simply chip away at one another, a constant metaphorical ear-

tweaking which persists through dinners in restaurants, joky beddings and occasional moments of crisis.

As a style it extends to several levels: the apocalyptic ("Here is her personality: it is a pack of wild dogs on a leash, dragging her around"); the elegiac ("Her pale blue eyes had a faraway quality, like someone in the process of remembering something curious or sad from long ago"); the worryingly stretched ("She slipped herself between her envelope-like sheets and mailed herself off to sleep"). What undermines each of them is the reader's complete inability to work out what sort of a position to take up with regard to the cast.

"*Don't make any jokes,*" Dinah thinks when hunky Roy makes his first appearance. "*Don't make any bad jokes.*" Unflustered by this sapient advice Roy and Dinah immediately make some very bad jokes indeed on the unlikely subject of muffins ("I'm afraid I don't have a strong muffin ethic" etc etc). There are three ways of looking at this exchange. One is that Fisher wants us to think that her characters are complete dorks. Two is that the whole thing is supposed to be sort of tender and funny. Three is that she doesn't possess the resources to make this distinction possible. On the evidence strewn elsewhere in the book the correct answer is three. Time after time the reader chances on some dumb formulation which may not, in the author's scheme of things, be a dumb formulation after all.

"If you meet an A-minus guy who doesn't like you and a B-plus guy who does, who do you like?" Dinah inquires of Roy (Rudy having sensibly skedaddled). Depending on how you look at it this is either sincere (and achingly banal) or designed to elevate Dinah to an epic level of stupidity. Perhaps in the end it's simply that Fisher doesn't want to make the choice.

Satire depends on distancing yourself from the people you're writing about — really hating them — acknowledging that the whole Hollywood/Bel Air pool party is a glorified leper pit. You leave *Surrender the Pink* thinking that at bottom it's all dreadfully serious and that Rudy, Roy and the rest of the walking penises are just regular guys after all.

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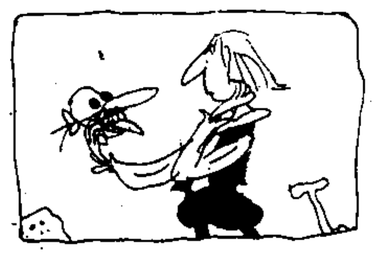


BEHIND THE SCENES

● BECAUSE theatrical people are, by their very nature, rather emotional, tears on opening nights are commonplace. However, when the Liverpool Playhouse opened Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge*, the tears were genuinely heartfelt: the staff had just been served with notice to quit.

The background to the drama is that the Playhouse receives just over £500,000 a year from the Arts Council and about £125,000 from Liverpool, Sefton, Wirral and Knowsley councils. To survive it needs £900,000 a year, so anyone with basic arithmetic can work out that the theatre was heading for disaster.

The real cause of the disaster can be traced to one of those policies that have made Lord Palumbo and his cultural henchmen at the Arts Council renowned for their ability to shift responsibility, and with it blame, on to other people. The policy in question, "parity funding", effectively means that the Arts Council reduces its funding or keeps it at the same level in order to blackmail local authorities into increasing theirs.

That has clearly not happened in Liverpool where the Playhouse has just cancelled a youth festival, called in the receiver and is planning to close in March.

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

□ THE Dirty Digger's empire is now so strapped for cash it is requesting easy payment terms from publishers over serialisation deals.

Last December the *Sunset Times* ran extracts from a biography of the *Leaderene*'s press secretary, Bernard Ingham, by one of the paper's columnists, Robert Harris. The agreed fee for serialisation was £20,000.

Brian MacArthur, the *Sunset Times* executive editor, has written to Harris's publisher, Faber & Faber, asking whether it would mind being paid in four monthly instalments. Matthew Evans, Faber's managing director and George Walker lookalike, has apparently responded to this amusing suggestion with characteristic *sang-froid*.

■ CAP'N Bob's publishing firm, MacDonald & Co, has recently lost a court case which it brought against cartoonist Ros Asquith and her publishers, Pandora.

MacDonald published two books of Ros Asquith's cartoons, *Baby!* and *Toddler!* But when Asquith wanted to have another book of baby cartoons published, MacDonald wasn't prepared to meet her requirements for money, so she took the new book, called *Babies!*, to Pandora.

MacDonald reacted testily by hiring another cartoonist to do a book about babies and by obtaining an injunction against Asquith's book. *She* magazine had been ready to publish cartoons from Asquith's *Babies!* in its Christmas issue, but the injunction stymied the arrangement. The case has since been dismissed with costs awarded against MacDonald.

'Bookworm'

Gas

Turbine trouble

THE GREAT gas bubble on which the future of the privatised electricity industry depends has started to burst — in the most unwelcome way and at the most embarrassing time possible.

Just when electricity producers National Power and PowerGen (NatPowerGen) are seeking cash from shareholders, and with the prospect of wealth for ever from cheap North Sea gas, a consortium that was supposed to be building a giant 1,000 megawatt gas turbine, the second biggest in the world, has pulled out.

The company is British Oxygen, whose chairman Richard Giordano also happens to be a director of... National Power. And National Power is the company that tirelessly tells the City how bright the future of electricity is — all thanks to "natural" gas.

Wearing his British Oxygen hat, however, Mr Giordano is leading one of Britain's biggest manufacturing companies *out* of a commitment to build a gas plant — behaviour which no doubt makes sense to the highest-paid company boss in Britain (salary: £1,024,562) if to no one else.

Mr Giordano has a KBE but the title is not usually used because he is only an American. He joined a consortium, with Hydro-Electric and Northern Electric, two companies thrown up by privatisation, to build a £600 million combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) plant called Neptune on Teesside. Now he has voted with his wallet and announced that he is pulling out after putting "a lot of effort into the project".

As director of National Power, he is paid a mere £15,000-odd a year. He and the rest of the board have committed the company's future to the use of more and more gas. Indeed its commercial director, Colin Webster, declared at the company's launch that it intended "to reduce costs and exploit the new opportunity of natural gas". It had already ordered its first CCGT power station and expected to proceed to others. There was no murmur of dissent from "Sir" Giordano.

Last Friday, National Power presented itself to the public with an appeal for shareholders. At the

Richard Giordano KBE

Lancaster House public relations ceremony it urged the nation to buy shares with the promise of a profitable future founded on, er, CCGT stations, exactly the opposite course pursued by its director, "Sir" Giordano, on behalf of British Oxygen shareholders.

Which is the real "Sir" Giordano — the one paid £1,024,562 for telling his shareholders not to waste their money on a short-lived gas turbine or the one paid £15,000 for his wisdom in seeking to attract new shareholders with a prospect of cheap gas as the fuel?

"Natural" gas of course pollutes just like "natural" coal and Neptune will deposit more than half a million tons of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere every year. In addition, methane — even more damaging to the atmosphere — leaks from the pipes which supply the plant, and gas prices will soar as supplies are depleted.

The news of the latest setback for gas comes as the public learns how much privatised electricity is going to cost: the price is going up by around 10 percent in April. This follows rises of 14.5 percent in the two years leading up to privatisation and another 9.2 percent last year. These rises were supposed to make the companies attractive to shareholders and to enable them to hold down prices after privatisation to make the public appreciate the value of competition. Very amusing.

When word leaked out that the rise was to be between 10 and 13 percent, Professor Stephen Littlechild, director-general of electricity supply, issued a statement explaining his position. It was "quite possible", he said, that increases of this magnitude would be acceptable. That was on 18 February. Following a cry of distress from the Department of Energy, two days later the professor wrote to the regional electricity companies (RECs) saying such huge rises would *not* be in order. He suggested they should spread the increases over several years — which is privatisation-speak for: "until after the general election".

Hanson plc

Cowboys and Indians

AS LORD Hanson and shareholders gushed over rising profits at Hanson plc's recent annual general meeting, four Navajo Indians from Arizona trooped into the swanky Barbican Centre to spoil the fun.

Token shareholders Maxine Kescoli, Leo Begay, Larry Biltah and Jerome Jackson came to the London meeting because the 100-percent Hanson-owned Peabody Coal Company wants to expand its leases to strip-mine 54,637 acres of traditional Navajo land, already the largest open-cast mine in the USA.

Mining wouldn't be so bad, said the four shareholders, if Peabody didn't contaminate the water with chemical effluents, pollute the air with coal dust, desecrate Navajo religious and burial sites, conduct poor land reclamation and turn local plants important for herbal medicine into mulch. In one major embarrassment, a whole herd of sheep died from drinking the water — not a small matter for the chiefly pastoralist Navajo.

Peabody's forcible removal programme — euphemistically termed "relocation" — does not guarantee a prompt return to the land, fully reclaimed, after mining. Currently there aren't even guarantees for new land elsewhere as compensation, the Navajo said. Some areas have remained fenced off for 10 years after mining and reclamation, preventing indigenous resettlement. Until these concerns are addressed they demand suspension of all operations.

Lord Hanson fielded shareholders' questions from behind a potted plant on the stage. While queries about 15 percent and 7 percent job cuts in the UK and US respectively did not seem to ruffle him, and the global warming phenomenon linked to the recent Peabody Coal acquisition was shrugged off as perhaps "temporary", Hanson became visibly cranky when Larry Biltah started talking.

Before Mr Biltah could finish, Lord Hanson cut him off, reminding him "not to give a speech, in deference to the shareholders". Hanson added that he would only deal with tribal councils, not individuals, as all Navajo land is owned by the tribe. To this the elderly, pinstriped audience erupted in loud applause.

When others pressed for more details on Peabody, m'lord said: "I'm sorry, we cannot take any more questions on this" and "this is too big an issue to go into today." Later still, he accused professional protestors of sabotaging the proceedings.

Though Peabody employs a significant number — almost 800 — of 1,200 local Navajo, their dissatisfaction runs high. The region's tribal councils have joined community members like the four who attended the AGM in opposing further mining until Hanson and subsidiary clean up their act.

The result is a European speaking tour, taking in Britain, Germany and Switzerland aided by groups in the UK like Minewatch, SI, the Methodist Church Division of Social Responsibility and the Onaway Trust. In Geneva the Navajo will address the United Nations Commission for Human Rights hoping for a ruling on Hanson plc similar to an earlier one defending the Lubicon Cree against low-flying test sorties by Nato aircraft.

The Olympics

Coe comfort

LONDON-BASED critics of Manchester's unsuccessful bid to host the 1996 Olympics are now severely embarrassed following the monumental cock-up of their own attempt to organise a single bid to rival Manchester for the games in the year 2000.

Although the rag-bag of London-based sports personalities have now patched up their differences and, with seven hours to spare before the British Olympics Association's second deadline, presented a single bid from the capital, it is increasingly unlikely that the *fin-de-siècle* games will be held in Britain.

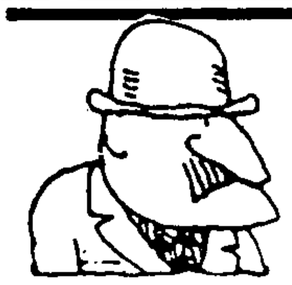
Manchester's polished and professional application to host the games for the first time in Britain since 1948 won only 11 votes from the International Olympics Committee (IOC) in Tokyo last September. Now the sporting world is wincing at the crass incompetence wrought by the warring no-hoper factions tussling for the London lead.

First off the mark after Manchester failed was the London 2000 group headed by Sebastian Coe, the would-be Tory MP, and backed by Daley Thompson and Tottenham Hotspur's Gary Lineker. Strangely the group outlined plans to use existing stadia for the Olympics. What stadia?

Next to emerge was the London Council for Sport and Recreation, an amalgam of 33 London boroughs dominated by Labour councillors and hostile to arch-Conservative Coe. For weeks the two groups tussled, with the boroughs unhappy at accepting the mild-mannered athletic genius as a figurehead for a single bidding group, despite the efforts of Labour MP Kate Hoey as mediator.

The British Olympics Association's (BOA) deadline passed and London supporters wanted the rules changed so the capital could present two bids (other cities are only allowed one). In a remarkable display of magnanimity, Manchester agreed. Then, seven hours before the "second" deadline expired, London got its act together with Coe in charge of the newly-renamed London Olympics 2000 Campaign. It has a few weeks to convince the BOA of its suitability in representing Britain, although it claim that only a bid from the capital stands a chance is absurd — only two of the last seven chosen sites are capitals and the clear favourite for 2000 is another provincial city, Berlin.

Manchester meanwhile knows it has no chance of winning the nomination. It is an open secret that the city's continuing involvement is purely a metaphor for its grandiose north-west renaissance plans, borne along with the resurgent Manchester Ship Canal Company as outlined in *Eye* 751. More to the point, no IOC member in his or her right mind is going to vote for a British city to stage the games once the multi-million pound losses are totted up from the fiasco due to take place at this summer's World Student Games in Sheffield, just 35 miles away from Manchester.



In the City

"IT'S A very private matter who gets what." So declared a spokesman for Barclays de Zoete Wedd last November when it was announced that Barclays Bank was buying out the minority shareholders in its stockbroking arm for a more than generous £111 million.

The deal raised more than a few City eyebrows. Not only was BZW being valued at some £770 million at a time when stockbroking was hardly a boom business, but the founding fathers from Wedd Durlacher and de Zoete had already been paid once — £40 million in cash and loan stock plus up to £74 million in BZW Holdings founders shares — when Barclays bought in first time round. But then in the Temple of Mammon too much is never enough.

But as Barclays shareholders prepare for imminent bad profit and billion pound debt provision tidings they might care to question their directors as to why they felt minded to be so generous with shareholders' funds in a time of general belt-tightening and poor BZW profits.

Especially as the lucky 300 BZW minority shareholders — partners present and past plus relatives, together with the vendors of the French and Australian broking firms BZW acquired — are said to have held an option to sell their BZW Holdings founders shares back to Barclays at 100 pence each at the end of 1990 compared with the 150 pence Barclays paid.

The mood of shareholders may not be improved by the realisation that they made no less than 19 BZW executives millionaires as a result of the buyout. Almost 30 others received more than £500,000 for their trouble. Such statistics go a long way to explain BZW's reticence in naming names and numbers.

Thankfully this cloak of anonymity can be substantially lifted by a study of Ebbgate Holdings, the Barclays subsidiary in which the senior BZW executives are directors. The latest Ebbgate (named after the BZW offices) accounts, filed a month before the buyout, lists many of the major BZW founders shareholders as at the end of 1989.

First prize among these in the payout bonanza would seem to have gone to Andrew S. Cullen who held 1,601,658 founders shares. These could have been worth the best part £2.5 million at 150 pence. Close behind were Jonathan Davie, managing director of the fixed interest division and one of the negotiators of the buyout terms, who held 1,589,429 shares worth £2.4 million at the buyout price and Global Equities chief Tim Coghlan who held 1,503,529 worth £2¼ million pounds.

Gerald Dennis, who retired as chief operations officer last year, was nicely placed for a golden goodbye with 1,473,000 shares which would have been worth £2.2 million. Simon de Zoete, the other negotiator on behalf of the BZW partners, held 1,333,500 shares, worth just over the £2 million mark.

A wallet-warming £1½ million or more each would look to have been shared by R.J. Priestley, P.R. Withers Green, I.H. Macdonald, J.R. Townsend and F.P.S. Phillips.

Sums of £1 million or more each could seemingly have been shared by S.R. Frisby, T.J. Sinclair (Ken Sinclair, chief of the fixed income division and another Sinclair shared £1.5 million), K.H. Weston, N.J. Durlacher (Richard and WP boosted the family take by another £1 million-plus), H.A. Joules, H.B. Coates, J.D.H. Ross, N.O. Brigstocke and G.A.R. Wilkins.

Doubtless these and other fortunate BZW founders shareholders will say with total justification that they came cheap at the price.

PS: The BZW shareholders turned out a lot richer and smarter than those in Alexanders Laing and Cruickshank who ended up taking part, maybe up to £15 million, of their expected take-home pay from the sale of the firm in British and Commonwealth loans stock. This followed B and C's takeover of Mercantile House which had bought the old L and C business for just £25 million. The loans stock is now close to worthless.

GERALD RONSON: Ford popular?

WHILE Gerald Ronson celebrates his release from a six-month stay at Ford, he emerges to find dark clouds looming once again over Pima Savings and Loan, his Heron Corporations' insolvent former Arizona subsidiary which had to be rescued by Uncle Sam.

Federal regulators are now probing Pima for alleged negligence and fraud. So far the investigation only relates to possible civil action by the Resolution Trust Corporation which acquired Pima. But the RTC can refer any criminal matters it uncovers to the Justice Department.

Former Pima executive Martin Mortimer has already pleaded guilty to corruption charges in relation to bad loans he made without Heron's knowledge. One of the recipients has also been charged.

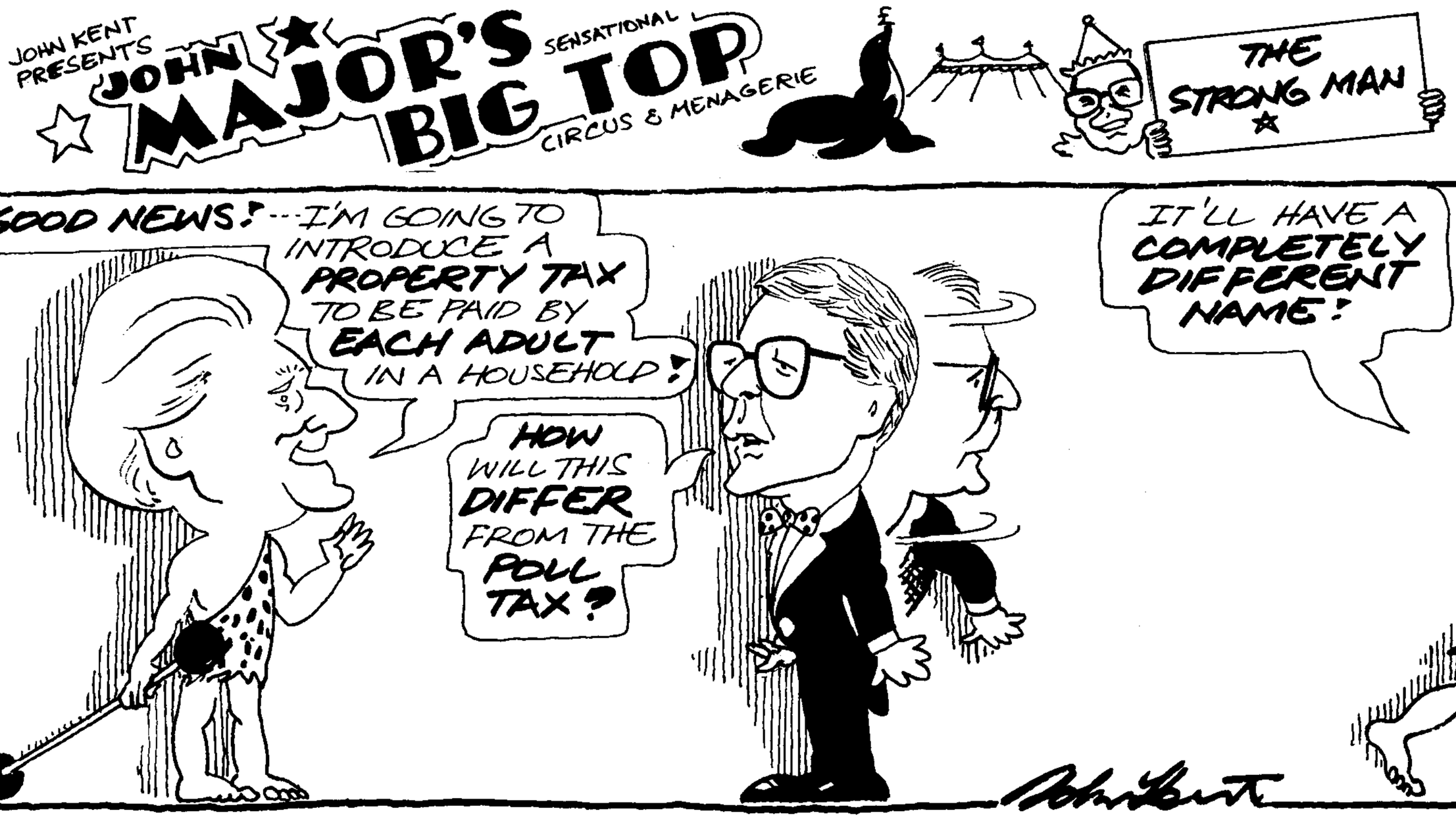
Heron and Ronson will no doubt be hoping it will not be necessary to add to the minimum two-figure-million cost of Pima by facing any further unjustified civil claims.

THE 12 lucky winners of the Blue Arrow jury sweepstake were no doubt reassured to hear prosecuting counsel Nicholas Purnell QC assure them at the end of their first week that the case was not "about arcane difficult propositions of law, nor is it about the mysteries of the merchant banking world".

In that case, as the weeks turn into months (at least eight are expected to be required) and the parade of more than 100 witnesses passes by, one or two might wonder just why something so simple takes so long — one mystery to which only m' learned friends ever have the answer but which may come to be asked at the end of this multi-million pound exercise, dependent on the result.

Also waiting in the wings for debate at that time is the lesser mystery as to who is it who can afford or be available to spend eight months full-time on a jury considering such non-arcane and/or difficult City matters? Certainly none of those who earn their living understanding merchant bank mysteries.

'Slicker'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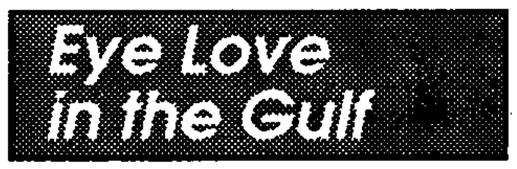

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CHARMING WOMAN, 42, graphic designer, looking for nice tall London man. Photo please. Box 6362.

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MATTIE STORIN seeks Francis Urquhart. (Unattached and non-pathological please!) Box 7162.

MALE ATHLETE, 21, requires experienced female coach. Hampshire. Box 7262.

INFLATABLE FROG (29) seeks practical princess. Own open mind, talented, beautiful and adventurously athletic prerequisites. Cordon bleu bluebottle a bonus. Photo appreciated. *Sheffield/N.* Notts. Box 7362.

SLIM, VERY ATTRACTIVE lady writer, 40. Single, lives London. Interesting life still leaves gap for intelligent, chivalrous gentleman to anchor blithe spirit. Box 7462.

DOES ANY WOMAN who shops at Waitrose Witney need TLC? Box 7562.

WANTED — Original loner to give me a baby. Educated, clean, strong. No financial ties. Photo. Box 7662.

INVESTOR OR husband for Goldie Hawn romantic lookalike. All looks well to the world but three businesses falling apart, perfect hostess. Why eat a burger out, when steaks indoors. Age 36, S. East. Box 7762.

SMART LADY sought for pig-in-the-face fun. Male slapstick devotee. Box 7862.

VERY ATTRACTIVE, London lady, 30, successful, independent, warm, stylish, slim, desires very handsome consort to share wicked humour, travels galore, movies, dance, music, romance Photo essential. Box 7962.

MALE, 50, houseowner, unattached, slim, tall, into the outdoors, mountains, photography, seeks younger, say 30s, tallish, attractive female for sharing similar interests and love. East Cheshire. Photos exchanged/returned. Box 8062.

GENIAL young male philosopher craves female to expedite in defining orgasms. Box 8162.

SENSUAL OXFORD undergraduettes need spoiling by beautiful weird wasters or sexy football fiends. Box 8262.

GENEROUS MALE, thirties, seeks attractive female for discreet relationship. Letter, photo, phone, please. Hants area. Box 8362.

WOMAN, 25, wants clever man. Clwydian Hills please. Box 8462.

TALL, SLIM, thoughtful, single, male, graduate, 30, seeks reasonably attractive and intelligent non-smoking female, 19-33. Bucks, Beds, Northants, Elsewhere. Box 8562.

SKIER, 35, seeks attractive female company (25-35) for the slopes. Don't worry if you can't ski, but a good sense of humour is a must. Photo appreciated. London/S.E. Box 8662.

MIDDLE-AGED author has extremely bizarre proposal for young, attractive lady. (London/South) Box 8762.

TALL, QUIET, sportscar driving Yuppie (26) seeks younger female for life in the fast lane. Box 8862

MANCHESTER/NORTH WEST attractive bachelor, 33, Oxbridge graduate, successful, many interests, including theatre, travel, classical music and country walking. Romantic, caring and outgoing disposition seeks stimulating, educated companion with a view to committed relationship. Box 8962.

DO YOU HAVE twiglet legs and dark hair? Girlfriend sought by male (23), slim, sporty, who has just moved house and needs you! Gloucestershire. Box 9062.

ATTRACTIVE, professional male, 31, seeks bored but not boring lady of leisure for daytime dalliance. Surrey/Hampshire borders. Box 9162.

INTELLECTUAL MALE 42, 6 ft, slim, attractive, sensual, seeks a lady who would appreciate these qualities. Box 9262.

LONDON MALE, 20 seeks discreet, sexy lady (18-45) for lighthearted fun. Box 9462.

SINGLE MAN early 30s, seeks attractive lady who enjoys classical music and long country walks. South Yorks area. Box 9562.

LADY, 38, sometimes naughty, always nice, attractive, articulate, intelligent, loyal — seeks permanence — do you? Box 9662.

PRODIGIOUSLY HANDSOME, brains, money, up-market male, 40s, seeks genuinely attractive, bright woman, 30s for discreet, delicious, term relationship. London. Box 9762.

LADY, 29, 5'8", slim, extremely beautiful, wealthy, divorced. I shoot, fish, ride, play tennis and have a busy social life. I dislike wine bars, phoney dinner parties and most nightclubs, which is perhaps why I find myself placing this ad. I would love to meet a tall, happy, extrovert man, also wealthy, sporty, unmarried, and who loves to live life to the full. Age unimportant. View friendship, long term relationship, marriage, babies, who knows? Box 9862.

JOAN COLLINS lookalike needed by gentlemanly, leisured, ex-navel officer/adman, clean-cut, handsome, smart. Photo-exch. 081-892 6700.

ADVENTUROUS EDUCATED (29) lady, returned to London and boring social scene. Are you 30ish, cultured with sense of humour and fancy dinner? Photo. Box 9962.

MILLIONAIRE OR THEREABOUTS
for thirtysomething blonde, well educated, seeking husband to start a family.
Box 9362.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 31, absolute slob, honest, likes pubs, eating out, etc. Seeks female, any age with good sense of humour for friendship with fun. North Wales. Box 10062.

LONDON professional lady (28) seeks witty, sporty, 30ish, single man. Photo appreciated. Box 10162.

ATTRACTIVE, agreeable, professional, wealthy male (38) seeks particularly busty (not fat) lady. More extreme the better! Age not terribly important. Nothing denied suitable applicant. Photograph appreciated. Every response acknowledged. Box 10262.

BRUNETTE BIMBO- with-brain and bambino (7) seeks intelligent, unattached man. West London. Box 10462.

VEGETARIAN MAN, 46, stable lifestyle, seeks caring friendship/partnership with veggie or vegan female. London. Box 10562.

EUROPEAN professional, married man, 48, considerate, sincere, well travelled, seeks discreet, uncomplicated relationship with non-smoker lady. Discretion assured. London area. Box 11062.

ELIGIBLE BACHELOR, 31, tall, strong, handsome and kind, seeks pretty, blonde, public-school girlfriend, 18-22. (Send photo). Box 12161.

NICE LOOKING tall gent, 28, seeks lady for friendship, love, passion and adventure. (Oxon). Box 10662.

INEXPERIENCED, intelligent, male graduate, 26, humorous, solvent, seeks experienced lady tutor, any age. Uxbridge/West London. Box 10762.

A VERY SEXY, amusing and safe young man, 31, single with own house, would like to meet an older woman for romantic, passionate and exciting liaisons. I am both discreet and genuine. Go on, take a chance and reply — enjoy yourself. Photo please. Hants/South. Box 10862.

FABULOUS AT FORTY, attractive blonde graduate, I'm a City liver and country lover, looking for a good friend and possible partner. (Merseyside/Manchester area). Could it be you? Box 10962.

WARWICKSHIRE MAN, 36, single, bespectacled, balding, medium build, intelligent, seeks slim/average build, understanding lady who needs love and loyalty. Sad eyes a plus. Photos exchanged. Box 11162.

FOR THE WOMAN who wants something different. Amusing, well off, intelligent and discreet Indian male, forty, occasionally available. London. Box 11262.

MALE, 37, professional, easy-going, wealthy, seeks interesting female, 29-45 for uncommitted, uncomplicated relationship. London. Box 11362.

More than one Box Number reply?
Write the numbers on each envelope and put them all in a larger envelope addressed to us marked "BOX NUMBER REPLIES"

HAPPY, SLIM, 40s, prof. male seeks loveable, 25-35 female for discreet friendship, fun, outings, East Midlands. Box 11462.

SINGLE, AVERAGE GUY, 36, student nurse from Sept 91, seeks single, average girl for friendship/correspondence. East Midlands. Box 11562.

POSSIBLY unrepeatable offer. Recently liberated professional guy, 42, seeks lady chum for fun, friendship and who knows? Bucks/S.E. Box 11662.

HOW CAN I meet an intelligent, independent and attractive lady? I'm male, single, 40, and in reasonable shape. Midlands based. Box 11762.

PRETTY WOMAN, blonde, 38, slim, graduate (History), musical, would value the friendship of a man of integrity. Looks don't matter. Wit, truth and unselfishness do. No ties and lies of and to wives, please. "Eye Love" zum Trotz. Box 11862.

LONDONER, male, 49, attractive, humorous, sensuous, intelligent, seeks interesting, younger female companion, view kisses, cuddles, lasting friendship. Box 11962.

BEAU (or not so beau) wanted by 45 year old, lively, attractive, redhead, to join her at Ronnie Scott's, the NFT, and on weekend country walks. Box 12062.

ATTRACTIVE BUBBLY LADY 60+ would like to meet cultured, solvent gentleman for dancing and foreign travel. Box 16962.

OUR DAD is a young 53, unattached, successful, amusing, kind and generous living Central London and North West. He deserves attractive, lively, younger girlfriend, 35-50, perhaps to marry. Every letter with photo answered. Box 17062.

DERBYSHIRE ENTREPRENEUR thirties seeks confident wild cat. Box 17162.

GOODLOOKING MAN 32, friendly, sensitive, passionate, seeks honest relationship with warm, caring woman. Status/age not important. Hants/South. Box 17262.

ATTRACTIVE SINGLE male 40. Interested in intelligent, humorous, nice woman over 30. Good letter and photograph ensure reply. Box 16762.

SOFT SPOKEN Irishman with a glint in his eye, is generous, loving, educated, professional, cultured, well travelling/travelled and very pleasing to the lady's eye wants to spend his next 40 years in bliss adoring and pleasing a beautiful, green eyed lady. Genuine. No ugly people need apply. Thames valley. Write with phone no. Box 17362.

ATTRACTIVE FEMALE 38 seeks intelligent male. Midlands. Photo appreciated. Box 17462.

KIND, SENSITIVE easy going young man, 37, Cambridge area. Seeks attractive, personable young lady to make 1991 something special. Box 17562.

SEEKING Wizard howl. Box 17662.

JOHN Seeks Yoko. Box 17762.

FIONA PITT-KEITHLY sought by Bingo. Box 13162.

HAPPY SOLVENT and fit young 40s male 5' 10" seeks slim, bright and attractive sporty lady (maybe Celtic) to share fun in 1991. Lets ski, ride and dine. Only singles please. Photo. Complete discretion. Box 13262.

MORTAL SINNER Early forties, seeks female partner-in-rebellion for defiant (or discreet) sharing of impure thoughts and post-coital guilt. Yorks/Lancs. Box 13362.

FORTYSOMETHING Laid back seeks interesting lady for discreet fun and friendship age, status, race unimportant. London ALA. Box 13462

DEPENDABLE MALE 40, own business, good sense of humour, non-smoker, likes wining, dining, travel, outdoor pursuits. Seeks sincere fun loving female 28-38 to enjoy life with. Staffordshire/Cheshire. Box 13562.

EASY-GOING Not bad-looking professional graduate (29) seeks bored lady 20-40, single or married for occasional deeply-exciting, satisfying, sensual relationship. Daytime get-togethers possible. Will obey your instructions to ensure absolute discretion. Darlington area. Use full name for correspondence. Box 13662.

HANDSOME, TALL young looking 38 professional male in stale marriage seeks romance and fun with slim attractive female. Photo appreciated Box 13762.

FEMININE LADY Who wants to enjoy a good life with a good man. I am a medical professional, English, now single, secure with own company, Flat by Hyde Park and property in Canaries. I am looking for an intelligent attractive lady with warm personality to love and care for, dine, dance who is interested in Healthcare, good conversation and willing to support me in my chosen work. Brief details & photo & phone to meet. Box 13862.

ATTRACTIVE, SILLY Single male Designer, young 39, successful but unloved, seeks attractive, humorous lady to make life complete. Londonish. Box 13962.

PROFESSIONAL MAN 39 attractive enjoys theatre, restaurants, local politics (radical centre!) own business and homeowner seeks attractive, intelligent career minded lady for friendship and possible life-long affair (Hants/London) photo and letter appreciated. Box 14062.

WANTED MY MALE Counterpart 40 intelligent, professional, attractive likes travelling and cuddling. No attachments/young children. Photo much appreciated. Hopeful lady/London. Box 14162.

DESPERATELY SEEKING Three young, wealthy, attractive, fun-loving men for adventures. Photos please. Lancs. Box 14262.

HUMOROUS, CARING Attractive professional man 45 non-smoker seeks lady to share theatre, opera, dance. London or S.E. Box 14362.

HUMOROUS, HANDSOME Millionaire businessman, early 30s. SW1 based, seeks exciting female companion. Photo and phone number ensures reply. Box 14462.

Replying to a PRIVATE EYE Box Number? Address your reply to: Private Eye Smalls 6 Carlisle Street London W1V 5RG with the BOX NUMBER on the top line.

REASONABLY INTELLIGENT Attractive lady, slightly zany (49). Who loves life (in West London) but fed up with going on holiday with girl friends. Looking for affectionate, humorous gentleman, fifty-something to enhance life after work. Box 14562.

45 NOT OUT Still bursting with energy and enthusiasm for getting to know amusing, intelligent, goodlooking, kind, sincere man. Photo appreciated. Box 14662.

ATTRACTIVE, INTELLIGENT Woman, 47, divorced seeks similar male London/East Sussex. Telephone number and photo please. Box 14762.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 42, Slim, fair hair, interested in arts, music, theatre, foreign travel. Seeks attractive lady, 20-35 for evenings out and weekends away. Any nationality, central London. Box 14862.

ELEGANT WITTY MAN 43, top professional position, lean, kind, nice looking, wealthy, Chelsea, reeling from recent divorce otherwise no hidden defects. Seeking very beautiful woman friend, ideally much younger. Photo essential, will return. Unrepeatable new year offer! Box 14962.

ROMANTIC PROFESSIONAL male (45), single, 6ft, wide interests, located North Yorkshire. Seeks humorous, intelligent female for caring relationship. Photo appreciated. Box 15062.

UNIVERSITY MAN tall, healthy, fertile, desired by Mrs Robinson. Photos exchanged. Box 15162.

VERY BEAUTIFUL damsel 39 seeks millionaire pagan knight. Box 15262.

HEREFORDSHIRE ARTIST writer, musician (48) seeks nice girlfriend. 0531 5571.

ADVENTURER seeks adventuress for uncomplicated, uninhibited relationship. I am 38, healthy, wealthy and good company. All good adventures should be accompanied by fun and laughter. So if you feel like that and some of the other please contact. Box 15362.

FEMALE INDIANA JONES (27) attractive, bright, bemused, seeks soldier, sailor, spy (no tinkers) or even a nice bloke. Letters then meet. Box 15462.

WARM, SMOKELESS, independent professional woman, late 40s, seeks tall capable male, fit and free to share love of indoor and outdoor life. London/SE. Box 15562.

PRINCE CHARMING seeks Snow White for romantic evenings and making love. Box 15662.

LOST IN BARD'S COUNTRY Professional man, 30. Attractive, healthy and well behaved. Responds to chocolate cake and gentle stroking. Seeks a lady who likes long walks, the theatre and lying in front of a log fire. Box 15762.

WEST YORKSHIRE Attractive, solvent, artistically inclined businessman, a young and slim 34, seeks similar(ish) female for a fun friendship and the odd curry. Box 15862.

TASTY GEEZER, 30, single, keen sportsman, into pubs, parties and muddy rambles, seeks female companion for passion and fun. Photo please, London area. Box 15962.

MUCH TRAVELLED Journalist, 43. Shevelled and now becottaged in small S.W. village, seeks pretty woman of independent spirit and sharp sense of humour to share life and CDs. Photo would be nice. (Wouldn't it?) Box 16062.

AMUSING, ATTRACTIVE, sincere NW1 media man 44, living in barren relationship for sake of offspring. Seeks female in similar position. (30-50) for good conversation, genuine affection, optional tennis and entertaining times out. Photo? Box 16162.

DELECTABLE WICKED LADY mid 30s; seeks dusky, tasteful, witty, malleable man, 35-45. London/environs. Photo/letter please. Box 16262.

BACHELOR DOCTOR, attractive, 36, fit and healthy, loves the outdoors and travel. Has everything but the girl. Seeking slim, younger woman to share laughs and to love. Photo. Yorks. Anywhere. Box 16362.

A MILLIONAIRE — NO. East Midlands country dwelling professional, 40, single, slightly sane, seeks slim female, 25-38, is she you? Box 16462.

LINCOLNSHIRE "Brute and beastly shire" (Henry VII, King, fat, angrily) "TWIT!" (Me, male, 40, rebelliously) "I'm writing" (You, female 25-35, immediately) Box 16562.

NEWCASTLE BASED Gentleman, young sixty-something, half of failed marriage seeks non-smoking even younger fifty-something lady for slightly cultural, intellectual, epicurean and perhaps amorous pursuits. Box 16662

TWO ATTRACTIVE funny, vivacious, independent girls aged forty going on twenty, seek gentlemen for sorties 30+. Only stipulations are warm personality and outrageous sense of humour. South West. Box 16862.

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